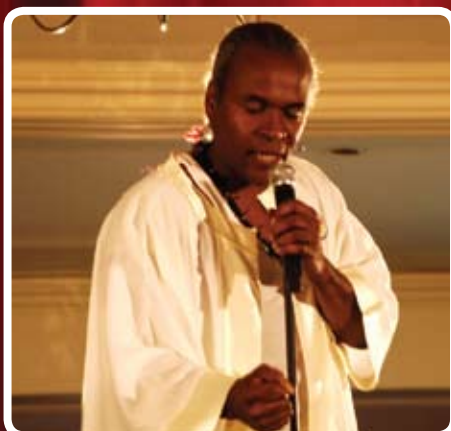


# COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW



## 2008 Post- Conference Issue





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## From the Executive Director

# Greetings Alliance Members!

■ BY HELEN SOULÉ

**Helen Soulé, Ph.D., has provided leadership to the public and nonprofit sector at the local, state, and national level for over 25 years. Most recently, Dr. Soulé served as executive director of Cable in the Classroom, the cable industry's education foundation. At the U.S. Department of Education, Soulé was chief of staff to the assistant secretary for the Office of Postsecondary Education. For eight years, she was director of the Mississippi State Department of Education Office of Technology, with responsibilities ranging from technology to textbooks to professional development. Her local experience includes being a teacher and district-level school administrator.**

It is an honor and pleasure for me to lead the Alliance for Community Media as your executive director. In the short time that I have been on board, I have already experienced the passionate, caring, committed, and professional nature of this community. I, too, am dedicated to the mission of the Alliance, to ensuring that all people have access to electronic media at the community level in order for democracy to thrive.

By way of introduction, let me tell you a little bit about myself. You will hear in my voice that I am a Southerner, accent and all, as I grew up in Texas and raised my family and spent much of my career in Mississippi. I received my Ph.D. in educational leadership from the University of Southern Mississippi.

For more than 25 years, I worked in many capacities, including teacher, technology coordinator, state technology director, and chief of staff, at the state, local, and national level in the education field. After coming to Washington, I served at the Department of Education, and then as executive director for Cable in the Classroom. To each position I brought a dedication to providing all people with equal access to the technology and media tools needed to ensure a quality education and an enthusiasm for lifelong learning. An extension of this passion for empowering individuals through the use of media and technology came with my first experience with public, educational, and governmental (PEG) access more than 20 years ago.

In our town, we had a City Council that was not functioning well. Efforts to defeat the ineffective council members had not been successful. Then the community PEG channel began to air the City Council meetings. All of the sudden, what the few had observed was seen by the entire community. The next election had a very different and decidedly positive

outcome—a victory that confirmed for me the importance and power of community media for a strong, effective democracy.

We all know this is a critical time in the development of community media, as the landscape is changing every day. Issues abound, but it is not a time to give up—it is a time to stand up. I encourage each of you to stand with the Alliance by ensuring your membership is current, by contributing to our Keep Us Connected campaign, and by actively participating in Alliance activities.

We have already had a successful beginning to the Keep Us Connected campaign. Thanks to the efforts of Alliance members Michael Max Knobbe of BronxNet and Barbara Popovic of Chicago's CAN TV, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a hearing on PEG access on September 22, 2008. The members attending were very supportive of and the hearing resulted in Chairman José Serrano (D-NY) and Representative Mark Kirk (R-IL) volunteering to send a letter to the Federal Communications Commission about the PEG issues we raised. Be sure to read the detailed article about the hearing that appears on page 46 of this magazine.

As your leader, my focus is to strengthen the Alliance, to increase its membership, and to stand up for you—and with you—in Washington, D.C., and across the nation to ensure that our mission is fulfilled and our democracy thrives with the help of community media.

Helen Soulé





## From the Board Chair

# A Time of Opportunity

■ BY MATT SCHUSTER



As I reflect on the 2008 Alliance for Community Media Conference and Trade Show in Washington, D.C., one main thought keeps coming to mind: This is an exciting time of opportunity for the community media movement.

The national Keep Us Connected campaign was launched with a concentration of our members making congressional visits. This campaign is a long-term effort that will continue in the years to come, but we are already seeing success. The Alliance and our members were instrumental in setting up the first congressional hearing on PEG in January of this year.

And now, a second congressional hearing was held in September that, once again, had an Alliance for Community Media representatives as witnesses. This second hearing is a direct result of our members' efforts as part of the first phase of the Keep Us Connected campaign. As this work continues, we will need additional resources to provide the support to reach our long-term goals. Please consider making a donation to the Alliance for these efforts.

In addition to our public policy work, the community media movement is poised to take full advantage of new media technologies in helping to build our communities and effect social change. As mentioned to me by Laurie Cirivello of Grand Rapids Community Media Center, community media has not seen a time of opportunity like this, due to technology, since the advent of the Portapak, the first portable video recording system, in the late 1960s.

In the decades since then, our work has to continue to evolve and change to incorporate new communication technologies. We need to be the experts in community building through media who can assist our communities in how

to best use media to meet their goals. I look forward to continuing to be a part of this evolution. I also look forward to a time when "new media" is no longer seen as something new, but is simply viewed as another tool for us to use.

The value in what we do on a daily basis is not rooted in the technology or even in the communications medium. Our value is rooted in the stories we tell in our communities, in how we keep people connected, and in the difference people and organizations can make in their communities through our facilities. It is those stories, and the faces of the people on either end of the communications path that bring us credibility.

Whether it is youth, like those from 'Olelo Community Television, independent producers like Graciela Rivera Oven, nonprofit organizations, teachers, elected officials, or the countless other people who use media, all of these people breathe life into what we do. This diversity of people creating change and building community through media helps to define our movement. I encourage everyone to be bold and seize this time of opportunity.

*Our value is rooted in the stories we tell in our communities, in how we keep people connected, and in the difference people and organizations can make in their communities through our facilities.*

---

**Matt Schuster is chair of the ACM Board of Directors. He manages the national award-winning government access channel MetroTV in Louisville, Kentucky. Previously, he was cable TV coordinator/station manager for Lake County, Illinois, and Meridian Township, Michigan. All three channels received multiple national awards from NATOA and the Alliance's Hometown Video Festival, including Overall Excellence in Government Programming. Matt also serves on the ACM Central States Region Board. He received his Master of Arts in Telecommunications from Michigan State University. Contact him at [matt.schuster@louisvilleky.gov](mailto:matt.schuster@louisvilleky.gov).**

# Conference Reflections

■ BY DEBORAH VINSEL



**As a 25-year member of the Alliance, Deborah Vinsel has served on the Central States, Western Region, and Northwest regional boards and on the National Board of Directors. In 1999, the Alliance recognized her commitment to the organization by honoring her with the Buske Leadership Award. In 2003, she was co-chair of the local planning committee for the national conference held in Tacoma, Washington. Deborah also coordinates the Hometown Video Awards. Deborah has worked in community media since 1983, managing PEG access centers in three different states. She is currently the executive director at Thurston Community Television in Olympia, Washington.**

**H**ello again! As I write this, it's been exactly four weeks since we gathered in Washington, D.C., for the annual Alliance for Community Media Conference and Trade Show. It was, in a word, great!

I have attended (dare I say it) 25 national conferences. We've seen remarkable changes in our industry, our organization, technology, and federal policy over the past two decades. But as the saying goes, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

I attended my first Alliance (formerly NFLCP) conference in 1984, in Denver, Colorado. The setting was majestic with the Rocky Mountains towering in the distance. I met wonderful people, some of whom mentored me as I grew as an access advocate and many of whom I am proud to have as friends today. The conference hosted a great trade show with the latest in "portable" analog video equipment that made it easier to create content for our channels. The Cable Act of 1984 was pending and the public policy committee worked into the wee hours every day drafting our suggested language and planning a strategy to communicate our concerns to our elected officials in Washington, D.C.

Now, fast forward to 2008. Washington, D.C., is another majestic setting. Flying in, I glimpsed the Jefferson and Lincoln memorials with the dome of the Capitol and the Washington monument towering in the distance. At the opening reception, we announced the creation of the Alliance for Community Media Video File Sharing Social Network, the latest in technology that makes it easier to share content for our channels. I met many wonderful people new to the Alliance and rekindled old friendships. In anticipation of a new federal administration, we launched the Keep Us Connected Campaign to bring our concerns to our elected officials with the

hope of securing supportive legislative and/or policy changes in the next Congress.

For the entire 25-year span of my career, I can't remember a conference at which we weren't planning new ways to tell our story, talking about potential threats to our existence, or getting the latest public policy update. However, though the past 25 conferences have been similar, in some ways each one has been unique. Every year we get to experience the regional culture of the city that hosts us. The local access centers bring their individual personalities, resources, and volunteers together to support our gathering. We greet new members and welcome new organizations to our fold. We share ideas, marvel at new technology, and ponder visions of what community media can become in our changing world.

We come together as colleagues to reconnect, not only with each other, but with that spark in each of us that keeps us involved in this movement. We learn much from attending conference workshops, and often more from sharing a cup of coffee over breakfast. We challenge ourselves to think beyond our current paradigm to a future of new media and our place in it. We build our movement on the foundation set by those who preceded us, and strengthen our resolve to protect it for those yet to come. We share stories and a cold beer. We dance. We laugh. Sometimes we cry as we remember special people we've lost.

I've come to expect certain things from the Alliance Conference. I know I'll be invigorated to continue into another year. I'll see old friends and make new ones. The newest technology will dazzle me. And, I'll be blessed to share the moment with some of the most remarkable people I've ever met.

I can't wait 'til next year. See you all in Portland!



## From the Guest Editor

# CMR Post Conference Edition

■ BY DEBRA ROGERS



Flying into Washington, D.C., is always such a thrill for me. As a child, it was one of my favorite places to visit. As an adult, I have come to appreciate the historic significance of our nation's capital. For me, Washington holds as much allure today as it did those many years ago. The significance of this place is never lost on those of us who work to insure that our neighbors have a place to express their views and exchange ideas. Walking past the National Archives and Supreme Court is an affirming reminder of the critical nature of the work we do.

As much as I look forward to visiting Washington, I equally look forward to seeing my Alliance for Community Media friends from across our country. The time we spend together talking and learning has been invaluable to me, as I am sure it is to others. Where we are often isolated in our communities as the only access centers, once a year we come together to share and build on the year's successes. You all inspire me to do better and for that I am infinitely grateful.

In this issue of *Community Media Review* we are pleased to provide a sampling of the numerous and wonderful workshops and events that took place this summer. "Creative Collaborations" are an important aspect of the work we do and **Anne D'Urso Rose** explains how Malden, Massachusetts has knitted their center into the fabric of their community. **Peter Guttmacher** tells us "Why It is Beneficial for Community-based Organizations to Connect with Community Media," and **Deb Vinsel** brings us "Conference Reflections."

**Clodagh Rule** and **Betty Yu** explain how youth programs are shaping the mission and direction of access centers in "Access Centers Bring Youth Media to the Next Level." **Laurie Cirivello** moves us forward with new media and **Sam Mayfield** tells us about mak-

ing media around the world. It was a thrill to hear from our three Leadership Award Recipients—Buske Leadership Award recipient **Tom Bishop**, George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication recipient **Margie Nicholson**, as well as Jewell Ryan-White Award for Diversity recipient **Graciela Rivera Oven**. The Hometown Excellence winners are highlighted by **Deborah Vinsel**.

Listening to **Amy Goodman** and **Gloria Tristani** is always inspiring and we are fortunate to have excerpts from the keynote panel discussion with them, **Kojo Nnamdi**, and **Mark Lloyd** in this issue. **Tonya Gonzales** provides an update on the Equal Opportunity Caucus and how no voice is left out. **Betty Yu** brings us new ideas in training in "From the Community to the Community: By Any Media Necessary." One significant part of this year's conference was the Public Policy—Keep us Connected Campaign, and **Sean McLaughlin**, **Alan Bushong**, **Malkia Lydia**, and others bring us up to speed on this effort.

The common thread to any Alliance conference is collaboration and this was demonstrated as I have never seen before in the closing ceremony with storytelling and dance by members of Native American tribes who had gathered in Washington, D.C., for the Longest Walk 2. In step as one, these wonderful guests of the Alliance reminded us how beautiful the rhythm is when we dance together. May the memories and stories we shared in July sustain you until we are together again.

Debra Rogers has worked in Community Media for 27 years. She has served as the executive director of Falmouth Community Television in Falmouth, Massachusetts, for over 12 years. Debra has been involved with the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) for 20 years, as one of the founding members of the Massachusetts Chapter. She served as the Northeast Region representative to the national Board of Directors from 1999 to 2005 and will return to the board this November. Debra is the 2006 recipient of the Alliance for Community Media, NE Region Chuck Sherwood Leadership Award and the 2007 recipient of the National Buske Leadership Award.

# Why It is Beneficial for Community-based Organizations to Connect with Community Media

■ BY PETER GUTTMACHER

I recently had the pleasure of taking part in a unique convening around a very interesting topic. Sponsored by DCTV, our local public access channel, “Got Media?” brought both funders and providers around the table to discuss and explore the existing and potential benefits to community-based organizations of connecting through community media. There are three distinct ways that community media connects community-based organizations.

First, my focus is young people. I am lucky enough to be part of a wonderful organization called the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, whose broad range of services, partnerships, and initiatives center around the betterment of Washington, D.C.’s, most precious resource—its young people. Our work brings me in contact with a wide variety of youth-serving organizations—both parent centers and before- and afterschool programs—across the District of Columbia.

Life-changing and lifesaving work is done in these places, yet they are often overlooked in the general media. Having a forum like community media is indispensable in getting the word out about their good work, to bring information about their services and opportunities to young people and their families as well as to raise public awareness of the value and accomplishments of individual youth-serving programs and youth-serving programs in general. For example, DCTV has worked with community-based organizations to provide opportunities for

**Corporate consolidation of media has negative effects on consumers and PEG access.**

them to create their own public service announcements at the DCTV studios, which were then run on the public access channel.

Media is all around us and, most certainly, it is all around our young people. Though they are targeted, even bombarded, by it, they rarely get to learn how to use it. Connecting to community media can provide young people with tangible and technical skills for the careers of the 21st-century marketplace. Moreover, using media themselves gives young people a forum in which to be on the creating end, rather than the consuming end, of media use. They can craft their own messages about matters that are important to them.

Young people are passionate about the world around them and general media often overlooks, trivializes, or co-opts things that they find to be of real consequence in their lives. Again, through DCTV’s “TV Boot Camp,” young people in several programs I have worked with have been able to experience an amazing, summer immersion in how to make meaningful, professional video. And as any youth worker can tell you, young people place a high premium on getting to DO something in the programs they

attend. Those powerful developmental needs of “mastery and future” and “self-worth and the ability to contribute” are rarely more tangible than they are when you are making your own show.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, connecting to community media gives young people the chance to connect to their communities. This is a two-way street. One side runs to youth. Young people need structure through which they can become more informed and invested in where they live. Investigative youth reporting, documented service-learning projects, youth mapping reports, videotaped oral history projects, and person-in-the-street interviews, all are examples of ways in which youth can use media to establish a stronger connection to their neighborhoods and the city around them.

The other side of the two-way street runs to the community. Despite the lip service that “children are our future,” we live in a media culture where young people—especially adolescent young people—are seen for their deficits, not for their assets. They are almost exclusively portrayed as victims, victimizers, problems, and threats to each other and to their communities. Yet the truth about young people is much richer than that. Young people are already thinking, caring, creating members of our society. And every time a media message sheds light on that fact, we are all better for it. Community media, either in the hands of young people themselves, or used to highlight their




lives and achievements, is a powerful tool in creating a culture that truly sees and values our young people for who they are and what they have to offer. The more a community acknowledges and invests in its young people, the more they will reciprocate.

I am delighted to have been both a part of DCTV's "Got Media?" brainstorming and of the 2008 Alliance for Community Media Conference and Trade Show at which we reported our experiences with the DCTV program. When it comes to connecting

our communities and the people who live in them, community media has a tremendous amount to offer. ■CMR

---

**Peter Guttmacher is the director of programming and curricula development at the DC Children and Investment Trust Corporation. The "Trust" was formed in June of 1999 as a 501(c)(3) organization to link public and private resources, creativity, and commitment to address strategically the long-term needs of children.**



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# Creative Collaborations

■ BY ANNE D'URSO ROSE

**Well-designed collaborations create opportunities for our media centers, by bringing in resources or extending our outreach, without taxing our time, staffing, and existing resources.**

**C**ollaborations knit access centers to their communities, weaving us firmly into the fabric of the cities and towns we serve. Well-designed collaborations also create opportunities for our media centers, by bringing in resources or extending our outreach, without taxing our time, staffing, and existing resources. A workshop during the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) Conference in July 2008 explored Creative Collaborations.

Representing Malden Access Television (MATV) in Malden, Massachusetts, I spoke on the panel about the Cyber Café @ Malden Square, established in 2001 as a creative collaboration between MATV and several other local organizations. The Cyber Café provides residents of Malden and surrounding communities with access to computers and the Internet, as well as basic computer training, all for a nominal fee. It serves as a site for employment and financial literacy programs, and is now being used for multi-media production workshops, as an adjunct site to MATV.

Now in its seventh year, the Cyber Café was founded by the Community Technology Access Coalition (CTAC), the members of whom are the managing partners of the Cyber Café. These organizations came together because it fit each of their missions to provide this resource to Malden, a blue-collar, lower- to middle-class community with a large immigrant population located north of Boston. The lead agency is Tri-CAP (Tri-City Community Action Project), an anti-poverty agency that allocates street-level space in one of the buildings it owns, as well as a portion of their federal and state grant funding to house and help fund the Cyber Café. MATV also contributes funding and provides resources such as producing promotional and training videos. We also help to write grants and hold

fundraisers on behalf of the Cyber Café. The Career Place, an employment training and career service center, helps with funding and provides job training programs and resources at the site. The Office of State Representative Christopher Fallon (representing Malden) also contributes funding for the project. Murray Learning Associates, a small business serving nonprofits and private businesses, provides the core of the technical support for the Cyber Café. The key to the partnership is that everyone gives and everyone benefits.

The Café is operated mostly by volunteers. The one full-time employee, the Volunteer Coordinator, was originally paid through CTC-VISTA and now is paid through Citizens for Citizens, a senior employment placement agency. Volunteers provide front desk staffing, training, and technical support. An advisory committee and a technical committee are each made up of Cyber Café patrons, volunteers, and members of local organizations and businesses. The advisory committee has a public relations subcommittee and an accessibility subcommittee. The Café Management Team (CTAC) meets every few months to address issues of funding and the overall direction of the Cyber Café.

The success of this collaboration is clearly shown through CTAC's daily head counts and patron surveys. Patrons need only fill out a brief membership form (and, new this year, pay a \$12 annual fee) to use the Cyber Café. By the end of its first year of existence, the Cyber Café had more than 1,000 members; it has added approximately 1,000 new members each year. By the fall of 2006, the Café was averaging 60-plus users a day. Each of the nine computers was generally in use, often with a waiting line. However, at this same time, when the rent was raised at the original site, and one of the partners had to cut back on its funding

*Malden residents use  
the Cyber Café.*



share, CTAC faced the possibility of having to close the Cyber Café for good. At our management meetings, we discussed strategies and new decisions.

The story ended well. We contacted the local paper and they did a big spread on the possible closure of the Cyber Café headlined “Net Loss.” This helped to garner public support for this community resource and aided with our grantwriting and fundraising efforts. The lead agency, Tri-CAP, eventually decided to increase their role, then purchased a new building for their organization, and allocated a newly renovated space for the Cyber Café. They also were successful at securing a major federal grant, a portion of which was allocated to the Café. After research and patron polling, the partners instituted the \$12 annual fee. After leaving the former site and being closed for nearly six months, the Cyber Café opened at its new location in March 2007. The site, now across the street from MATV, is bigger, brighter, and airier, and hosts a training room with updated equipment.

For MATV, this transition prompted us to reflect on the importance of this collaborative venture in the overall vision of our community media center. Being a CTAC partner and helping to run the Cyber Café expands our outreach, particularly to the underserved sectors of the community—the homeless, disabled, unemployed or underemployed, and new immigrant groups. It builds on our mission of providing access to technology and the training essential to its use. With the updated training room, the Cyber Café provides an appropriate site for new MATV workshops in multimedia production. This fall, we will be premiering a Digital Storytelling class held at the Cyber Café.

The Cyber Café has succeeded and is continuing to thrive after seven years, even

though entities like it in other communities have failed. Its success underscores the model of community partnering represented by CTAC. Clearly, the Cyber Café would not exist in Malden were it not for the collaboration of this handful of community organizations. MATV is proud to be part of this creative collaboration that provides such a valued resource to the community.

My co-panelists presented very different and equally exciting types of collaborations. Rob Brading of MetroEast Community Media, described the collaborative structure of the OLLIE project ([www.ollietv.org](http://www.ollietv.org)), an educational program that integrates media and technology literacy with core academic and community learning in classrooms and after-school programs. Greg Sutton of Brooklyn Community Access Television described BRIC ([www.briconline.org](http://www.briconline.org)), a collaboration that presents quality visual, performing, and media arts programs that reflect Brooklyn’s diverse communities, and provides resources and platforms to support the creative process. We discussed the varying levels of structure, formal agreements, successes, and difficulties each collaboration experienced. We hope that the workshop helped to inspire new ideas for collaborations or strengthen existing ones.

What are your collaborations like? What are possibilities for new community collaborations? How can you help stitch together a new design in the fabric of your community to make it stronger, more functional, or more richly detailed? ■CMR



**Anne D’Urso-Rose is the Assistant Director of Malden Access Television in Malden, Massachusetts. Anne can be reached at [anne@matv.org](mailto:anne@matv.org).**

# Access Centers Bring Youth Media to the Next Level

■ BY CLODAGH RULE AND BETTY YU

**Our next generation of media makers are willing to take risks and explore new digital media tools for distribution that will help to redefine “community media”—bringing it to the next level.**

The ACM Conference panel on “Launching a Youth-Focused Media Program at Your PEG Center” proved that youth media is a vital fabric of today’s community media centers and it was clear that Alliance for Community Media members wanted to learn more about its growing influence in shaping the mission and direction of access centers. One message was clear from the panel: community media centers must work to foster the leadership development of youth. Our next generation of media makers are willing to take risks and explore new digital media tools for distribution that will help to redefine “community media”—bringing it to the next level.

Access centers throughout the country are collaborating with educational institutions, youth-based organizations, and individual young people to provide a platform that allows their voices to be heard in the changing media landscape. Nearly twenty years ago, Susan

Fleischmann, executive director of Cambridge Community Television (CCTV), created youth programs at her center which have helped ensure that their constituency keeps growing. Today, these youth programs have become a staple of the services that CCTV offers their community.

Workshop attendees included both centers that were interested in starting youth media programs and those who have programs up and running already.

Clodagh Rule of CCTV, whose center launched an afterschool program for teens in 2006, moderated the panel. She kicked off the panel by sharing a few ideas for centers to consider before entering into the business of operating a youth program.

Panelists representing four unique youth media programs at ‘Olelo Community Television in Hawaii, Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) in New York City,

## Access Centers with Youth Media Programs

### Atlanta People TV’s FUEL Media

[www.peopletv.org/ptv\\_youth.html](http://www.peopletv.org/ptv_youth.html)

### MNN’s Youth Channel

[www.youthchannel.org](http://www.youthchannel.org)

### Cambridge Community Television’s Youth Media Program

[www.cctvcambridge.org/youth](http://www.cctvcambridge.org/youth)

### St. Paul Neighborhood Network’s Youth Programs

[www.spnn.org/departments/youtheducation/youth.htm](http://www.spnn.org/departments/youtheducation/youth.htm)

### Grand Rapids Community Media Center’s Youth Channel

[www.grcmc.org/education/youth.php](http://www.grcmc.org/education/youth.php)

### ‘Olelo Community Television’s Youth Xchange

[www.olelo.org](http://www.olelo.org)

### Quote-Unquote

[www.quote-unquote.org](http://www.quote-unquote.org)



People TV in Atlanta, and Quote-Unquote in Albuquerque told stories about their programs and how they have evolved over the years to meet the needs of their diverse communities. Christian Naho'opi-hose from 'Olelo Community Television talked about the program's strong community focus and shared media about the program that really brought it to life. Isabel Castellanos outlined all of the ways that MNN's Youth Channel is working to get youth in their city involved in media making—from operating a youth channel, to running a peer training program for teens, to organizing media literacy workshops for elementary, middle school and high school youth throughout New York City. Antoine Haywood shared public service announcements and music videos that were produced by teens involved in People TV's Atlanta program. Steve Ranieri of Quote-Unquote highlighted an innovative new project that their community media center helped initiate which involves launching a Media Arts Collaborative Charter School that would provide youth with access to media making tools and resources.

The workshop concluded with a lively question and answer session. Some of the questions were about the implementation process—whether or not youth were paid stipends, if there was an application process, and where the trainings actually take place. Other audience members wanted to know if the youth programs were project based and how they recruited the young people. The panel also provided useful information and tips to individuals from centers that intend to design new youth media programs or enhance existing ones. ■CMR



Betty Yu



Clodagh Rule

## PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES

### Youth Media Reporter

[www.youthmediareporter.org](http://www.youthmediareporter.org)

### Listen Up Network

[www.listenup.org](http://www.listenup.org)

### Teaching Intermedia Literacy Tools (TILT)

[www.tiltmedia.org/links.html](http://www.tiltmedia.org/links.html)

### The Free Child Project

[www.freechild.org/youthmedia.htm](http://www.freechild.org/youthmedia.htm)

**Cynthia Carrion and Antoine Haywood,**  
**"The Right to Public Access TV is for**  
**All: Making the Case for Youth Media,"**  
**Community Media Review, Summer 2007**

[www.mnn.org/en/download-cmr-issue](http://www.mnn.org/en/download-cmr-issue)

Longtime community based media maker, educator, and activist Betty Yu is currently the director of community outreach & media at Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN), Manhattan's community access TV organization in New York City. At MNN, she provides media making tools and resources to organizations through video production training and a community media grants program. She can be contacted at [betty@mnn.org](mailto:betty@mnn.org).

Clodagh Rule is the director of marketing and development at Cambridge Community Television in Massachusetts.

# New Media Issues

■ BY LAURIE CIRIVELLO

This year's new media track at the Alliance for Community Media Conference was designed not as a technical series, but a group of workshops that helped attendees envision and define Web 2.0 opportunities and practices to help strengthen the future of PEG services in their communities.

As media centers deal with changes in funding, many are looking to deploy new operating and service models as a means to enhance and streamline services. The track was created with the premise that Web-based new media tools and opportunities are not merely a potential enhancement of video production services and marketing, but instead, offer historic opportunities to evolve our organizations from being primarily TV stations to full service media and technology assistance centers. Central to each workshop were questions and issues related to transitions.

Sessions one and two of this track were designed as primers providing a common glossary for discussing Web 2.0. In part one, presenters George Wietor (Grand Rapids Community Media, Michigan) and Tony Shawcross (Denver Open Media, Colorado) provided general descriptions and examples of blogs, wikis, podcasting, widgets, and more. In addition, Tony provided an overview of how their organization, with no operational franchise fee support, has deployed the open source content management system Drupal to create public access opportunities for Denver residents. In part two, Tony was

joined by Richard Turner, (MCT-TV, Montgomery County, Maryland) and Sam Mayfield (CCTV-Burlington, Vermont) to present examples of how specific centers are beginning to employ new media in their work. For instance, CCTV's recently deployed new website uses many interactive and new media tools. This content-rich site ([www.cctv.org](http://www.cctv.org)) includes online donation options, equipment reservations, and the ability to order DVDs. The site also contains a broad range of media to watch online, frequently updated news and information, and the opportunity to organize and share content through the extensive use of tagging and social bookmarking tools (such as "digg").

In session three, "PEG Mission and the 2.0 World," Mike Wasenaar (SPNN, St. Paul, Minnesota), began by providing profound food for thought as he discussed Web 2.0 and organizational change. According to Mike, community media centers and access organizations need to be developing strategies and building skills to use Web 2.0 technologies to further their mission. Community media centers and access centers often lack sufficient slack to invest in skills and people, develop new programs, or experiment with the freedom to fail. Like a rope that's too taut from excessive stretching, these organizations are unable to move resources to adapt and change.

Asking community media centers to evolve under threat, or at the point of the metaphorical gun, as some governments demand, makes mat-

ters worse. Creative organizational decisions made under duress are not necessarily good ones, nor do they further the development of programs that will meet the needs of future communities. Sociologists actually describe the conditions of nonprofits who serve disenfranchised populations and have impossible demands to meet as "battered agencies." Many access centers fit this description well. It may or may not be comforting, but the problem of impossible social and governmental demands is present for many other nonprofits. Leadership is necessary to structure our organizations so they can adapt, invest in and adopt new technologies (see sidebar, p. 15, for related resource materials).

The session continued as Laurie Cirivello (Community Media Center, Grand Rapids, Michigan) detailed her perspectives on media centers as "assistive organizations" offering a range of media and technology services to meet community goals and needs. Beginning with how we define ourselves, she discussed the importance of minimizing policies and marketing positions that are self-limiting. She gave examples of how we can sometimes encourage others to see media centers as "only about TV" rather than about community communication. Laurie feels that careful examination of our missions and practices are the first step to encouraging innovation in new media. She made a case that by diversifying the tools we have available to use, we can become more effective in our service, more invaluable to our communities,

## Concepts and Resources on Organizational Change in a 2.0 World

### Recommendations from Mike Wassenaar

#### On the need for proper slack

Woods Bowman, "Organizational Slack, or Goldilocks and the Three Budgets," *Non-Profit Quarterly*, Spring 2007.

#### The concept of Binding vs. Bridging Organizations

Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone*.  
See also [www.bowlingalone.com](http://www.bowlingalone.com)

### Web 2.0 and organizing complex tasks

Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody*.  
Shirky also writes at [www.shirky.com/herecomeseverybody](http://www.shirky.com/herecomeseverybody)

### Web 2.0 and the ability of nonprofits to adapt

Michele Martin, *The Bamboo Project*  
<http://michelemartin.typepad.com/thebambooprojectblog>

### Abundance rather than scarcity thinking

Michele Martin, *The Bamboo Project*,  
[http://michelemartin.typepad.com/thebambooprojectblog/2007/03/killing\\_the\\_mis.html](http://michelemartin.typepad.com/thebambooprojectblog/2007/03/killing_the_mis.html)

### Focusing on Assets of Power rather than Lack of \$, Control, Esteem, etc.

Tom Borup, "What's Radical About Valuing Assets as a Strategy in Cultural Work," *Community Arts*, 2005. [www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2005/09/radical\\_whats\\_r.php](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2005/09/radical_whats_r.php)  
Tom's work is also linked at [www.communityandculture.com](http://www.communityandculture.com)

### Connecting community media and future economies

Bill McKibben, *Deep Economy*.  
More info at [www.billmckibben.com](http://www.billmckibben.com)

more sustainable, and less vulnerable to changing technologies.

Several examples were given of funded projects that combined new and traditional media tools to meet community goals. One was a new online resource center being developed to serve the re-integration and job training needs of recently released felons. Designed by the Grand Rapids Community Media Center, and using video tutorials, online secure workspaces, extensive community resource banks and online referral systems, the soon-to-be-launched site was well funded by foundations interested in reducing recidivism among ex-felons. To find out more about the center's online media activities, go to [www.grcmc.org](http://www.grcmc.org).

Session four was designed to provide insight into the actual media and technology needs of one of PEG largest potential growth areas: "Service to

our Nonprofit Communities: Leveraging New Tools for Building Community." Nonprofit technology expert Ashima Saigal presented significant research illustrating how nonprofits are increasingly using technology in their work, and how PEG access organizations can help fill existing needs. Saigal works at the Johnson Center for Philanthropy is an academic center focused on philanthropy and nonprofit leadership ([www.gvsu.edu/jcp](http://www.gvsu.edu/jcp)), based at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan.

The session first revealed how nonprofits use technology and what their challenges are related to that use. Research shows that nonprofits have begun to embrace technology into their day-to-day operations, but most feel that they don't have the technology they need, nor do they have the staffing to make it work. Of the nonprofits surveyed, 51 percent

have no one assigned to technology and 47 percent feel their technology use is insufficient. Growth in the "IT services to nonprofits" sector has reinforced the premise that this is a significant area of opportunity. She also stressed that paramount to developing valuable media and tech services for nonprofits is to *first* know the programmatic needs of local organizations, and then to develop technology based solutions.

Saigal then walked attendees through examples of organizations that are initiating "new media" based technology solutions for nonprofits. Among the sites referenced were:

**Vermont Workers' Center,** <http://vtworkerscenter.blip.tv>: The Center has a regular program that airs on CCTV. Their show is available on blip.tv. They've connected these videos to their website with the help of CCTV.



**Grand Rapids Women's Chorus, [www.grwc.org](http://www.grwc.org):** The Chorus worked with the Community Media Center to revamp their website to make it easier to manage content. The site now saves the organization time and money by using a content management system that gives them the flexibility to maintain their own website. They also offer a database of their repertoire of songs for other choruses. It contains information about the songs that can be purchased, the publisher and links to the composers.

**Let Us Rise, [www.letusrise.org](http://www.letusrise.org):** Offers video to tell their story along with a site where content can be managed internally.

Finally, Saigal offered the following advice for centers anxious to expand their work in this area:

First, technology and media are so fast that there are many directions and paths to take. Continue to research to uncover more of what is happening nationally. In this planning phase, you will also want to survey your nonprofits, focusing on a specific area which you researched.

Second, build your own organizational capacity by educating your staff and experimenting internally. Human capital investments are one of the most lacking in the nonprofit sector. You are all nonprofit organizations. You need to invest in your staff. Research shows that organizations felt there was little time to spend on training and educating staff, but they also found the lack of staff skill to be a barrier to success.

Third, begin to engage the non-profit community. If possible, connect with your local Management Service Organization (MSO), statewide nonprofit organization or local united way. Make sure you find a collaboration point in your community. Survey your nonprofits in collaboration with another institution in your community that currently provides services to nonprofits. Provide education and support through presentations and direct support.

Session five, "Serving the Individual Voice through New Media," looked at new media to encourage greater diversity of speakers. Jay Dedman (independent journalist, Washington, District of Columbia) and Danielle Fairbairn (The Media Center, Palo Alto, California) discussed how citizen journalism and digital storytelling can expand content creation and distribution by more individuals. Dedman discussed his work as an active blogger author and online journalist, while Fairbairn outlined methods she employs when helping young people find their voice through The Media Center in Palo Alto. For more information on their work, go to [www.jaydedman.com](http://www.jaydedman.com) and [www.communitymediacenter.net](http://www.communitymediacenter.net).

The final workshop, "Still Saying 'No' to New Media?" provided an opportunity for attendees to talk about remaining barriers to effective inclusion of new media tools in their centers. Organized as a roundtable, presenters from previous workshops were on hand to provide encourage-

ment and advice on issues ranging from marketing to outreach to city funding agreements.

Overall, throughout this series of workshops, it was clear that new media tools offer significant opportunities for PEG centers that are willing and eager to evolve beyond strictly television based services. There are good examples of new sustainability models and methods that fully embrace new technology, not as an afterthought or an added perk, but as a core collection of new, web-based resources, innovatively applied to community service. ■CMR

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Laurie Cirivello is the executive director of the Grand Rapids Community Media Center, a multi-faceted media center serving the West Michigan community with GRTV cable access television, WYCE community radio, technology and Web services support for local nonprofits, media education, and operation of the historic Wealthy Theatre. Previously, Laurie was the founding executive director of the Community Media Center of Santa Rosa, a community access and community networking provider.

She co-authored the Alliance for Community Media's *Community Media Start-up Manual* and has provided consultation and support to numerous community based media endeavors.

For more information contact Laurie at 616-459-4788 or via e-mail [laurie@grcmc.org](mailto:laurie@grcmc.org).

# Making Media Around the World

■ BY SAM MAYFIELD

**A**s media activists, we seek to transform the existing media culture in this country and thus transform our everyday lives in terms of the perpetuation of war, creating peace, feeling more connected to the people around us, and making our communities stronger and safer. People all over the world are doing the same thing. We can be strengthened by this commonality.

I organized a global media panel for the Alliance for Community Media Conference and Trade Show in Washington, D.C., this year to highlight some of the work being done around the world in the name of community media. The 2008 ACM campaign, Keep Us Connected, is the perfect parlance for a Global Media panel.

The idea for a global media panel had two inspirations: My recent trip to Ghana, Africa; and the realization that if we are going to revolutionize our media in this country, we need to be unified with people around the globe and learn from each other's experiences.

Earlier this summer at the National Conference on Media Reform, Reverend Romal Tune said, "If we are ever going to be successful in changing the course of events in our media and on other critical issues in the progressive community, it is extremely important that we know we are supported by others in the community because we can achieve far more through unity than we can achieve on our own."

On the global media panel at the ACM conference, we heard about media being made in Africa, India, Japan, Thailand, and Venezuela.

Shinji Uozumi from Osaka, Japan, came to Washington, D.C., to share the situation in that country with us, saying, "There is no law that secures PEG channels in Japan. There is no obligation for cable operators to reserve

access channels for the people, but there are a few instances of community channel-like services in Japan. There are at least 20 cable operators that are active in showing locally produced programs."

We learned about ALBA TV in Caracas, Venezuela, from Jennifer Wager. She reports, "ALBA TV is a continental network of progressive community TV stations and video collectives in Latin America and the Caribbean. Founded in 2007, ALBA TV is currently focusing on the formative stage of developing capacity in various Latin American nations to sustain community video production and distribution. To that end, they have sent international brigades of media teachers and organizers to Ecuador and Nicaragua to lead workshops in 'cine popular' or the community-based media production." You can find out more at [www.albatv.org](http://www.albatv.org).

**If we are going to revolutionize our media in this country, we need to be unified with people around the globe and learn from each other's experiences.**



*Sam Mayfield and Nat Ayer interviewing Gifty and Selete Nyomi, directors of Coastal Television, Ghana's first and only community access television station.*

**Since media is made in so many ways around the world, it behooves those of us in the community media movement to learn from each other on all levels.**

We also heard from Ryanne Hodsdon, who taught video blogging to journalists in Thailand while working with StopHuman Trafficking.org. The bloggers and journalists were already aware of the importance of social media and putting video on the web. They just needed to learn the basic techniques to make it happen.

In India, Ryanne worked with local people documenting daily life. Videoblogging, in this sense, brings us closer to people all over the globe and gives us access to a way of life that would otherwise not be accessible. You can view her videos at <http://ryanedit.blogspot.com/search/label/india>.

In Africa, my colleague Nat Ayer and I worked with Coastal Television, Ghana's first and only independent community media outlet. We were there for the inaugural celebration of their television station and to support the great work they are doing.

Similar to community access in the United States, Coastal Television produces programming that reflects the community it serves. They host shows that educate the community on local affairs and they engage the community on many levels. Since the channel's beginning in May 2007, they have used text messaging as a means of getting feedback from the community. They scroll a message at the bottom of the screen asking viewers to "text this number if you enjoy this program and want to see more like it."

They also used text messaging early on to determine what the official language of their station would be. They asked viewers if they would like general programming to be in English or in their local language, Fanti. They received tremendous response from the community and ultimately decided to use English as the standard language. Coastal Television has a gorgeous future in Ghana. They have

incredible staff and are dedicated to making their community a better place through community access television.

Since media is made in so many ways around the world, it behooves those of us in the community media movement to learn from each other on all levels. Policy, technology, outreach, content, and the list goes on. By sharing knowledge and learning from each other, we learn about global communities. The value of knowing the ways in which other people make media and build community through media is revolutionary. We have partners around the globe who are with us in this struggle to create a media where everyone's voice is equally and honestly represented.

We hope that global media panels will be common at all media conferences. There is no doubt that the community media movement is strengthened when we are connected with each other. ■CMR



**Sam Mayfield lives in Burlington Vermont where she works for CCTV/Center for Media and Democracy. She has been working with community access television since 2001. She recently returned from Ghana, Africa, where she worked with the first community access television station in the country. Mayfield is dedicated to independent media, free speech, and building bridges.**



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# Alliance for Community Media *Awards*

**T**he Alliance for Community Media recognized three individuals for their outstanding contributions to the field of community media at the ACM National Conference and Trade Show in Washington, D.C., on July 12, 2008.

The Buske Leadership Award was presented to **Tom Bishop**, Executive Director of Media Bridges in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Buske Award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated commitment to the mission and goals of the Alliance for Community Media, leadership within the organization within the last three years, a high degree of involvement in the organization nationally, regionally and at the chapter level, and continuing service to the Alliance.

The George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication was presented to **Margie Nicholson**, a faculty member in the Arts, Entertainment and Media Management Department at Columbia College Chicago. The Stoney Award is given to an organization or individual who has made an outstanding contribution to championing the growth and experience of humanistic community communications.

The Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity was presented to **Graciela Rivera Oven**, co-producer and host of *Revista Semanal Montgomery* at Access Montgomery in Montgomery County, Maryland. This award recognizes those persons who show an outstanding contribution to a process that encourages, facilitates, or creates culturally diverse and/or non-mainstream community involvement in the field of community media. Her speech was not available as of press time.

## ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY TOM BISHOP

### THE BUSKE LEADERSHIP AWARD

**I**'m told by those who have received this award before that this speech is to be one of thanks, inspiration, and a challenge.

Since my time is short, I won't be able to name all of those who deserve it, but there are a few I must mention. Dirk Koning, who inspired me. Brian Wilson, who challenged me to be better than I ever thought I could be. Steve Fortiede, who I call "Sensei." My parents and sisters, who encouraged the comic book reading geek who took apart their radios and played with the 8mm film camera all the time.

And most of all I want to thank my sweetie, Liz. Those of us who have served the Alliance in one capacity or another know how important the support of those we leave at home is to what we do. As much as this award and all of you mean to me, nothing means more than when my sweetie tells me she is proud of the work I do.

I also want to thank every one of you I've ever served on a board with in the Alliance. You have made me better than would have been otherwise.

And to anyone in the organization who has ever given me a kind word, a hand up, or a kick in the pants when I needed it, thank you.

And now for the inspiration and challenge. One branch of my family has worked, and still does work, in the coal mines of Appalachia, so I've developed an interest in the labor movement.



One of my heroes in that movement is Phillip Vera Cruz who was a member of the Agricultural Works Organizing Committee in California, and later the United Farm Workers. He said, "If not you, then who? If not now, then when?"

Unfortunately for all of you I was also raised in the Pentecostal Church, where we have a tradition of call and response, so please, when I raise my left hand, say it with me.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

The last time we gathered in D.C., there were more than 600 of us. Now we are in the mid-300s, yet in some ways we are stronger than ever. We're not fighting for our first camera and half a staff member. We're defending hard-fought-for ground in our communities.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

We are in the fight of our lives. Literally determining whether media of the people, by the people, for the people, will continue to exist in our country.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

You may have a beef with someone in this room. Don't tell me about it. Don't tell your neighbor at the table. Go to the person you have the beef with and confront the issue. Work with them to find a solution. We don't have time for the petty stuff.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

Here at our conference we need you to show love to our staff, vendors, and sponsors. Without them, we'd all be sitting at home instead of gathering here to push our movement forward. Show them you appreciate what they do for you.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

Your communities need you now more than ever. In a climate where money talks and commercial media has more of it than anybody, the work you do for the people at home is vital. We need you to do even more.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

How many of you have contributed to the Keep Us Connected fundraising campaign? The money you contribute is the lifeblood of our fight.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

How many of you have been to the Hill to speak to your Congressional representatives? What are you waiting for!!!

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

Turn to the person next to you and point right at them.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

Turn to the person on the other side and do it again.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

Say it with me.

*If not you, then who? If not now, then when?*

Say it loud.

**IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO? IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?**

Say it real loud.

**IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO? IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?**

Thank you.

---

Tom Bishop is the executive director of Media Bridges, a nonprofit media arts organization that programs four cable channels in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was recognized for his long-standing and personal commitment to the mission and values of the Alliance for Community Media, his willingness to work with the broad constituency represented within the organization, and his leadership within the organization for more than 13 years. Mr. Bishop has served in leadership roles at all levels of the organization, including Central States Chair, Vice Chair of the Ohio/Kentucky Chapter, and Chair of the National Board of Directors.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY MARGIE NICHOLSON

GEORGE STONEY AWARD FOR HUMANISTIC COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS



Margie Nicholson, faculty member in Arts, Entertainment and Media Management at Columbia College Chicago, has managed the program of support for media centers at the MacArthur Foundation, served on grant review panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Technology Opportunities Program, and organized conferences on communications and leadership with the Donors Forum of Chicago, Executive Service Corps, Community Media Workshop, and International Leadership Association. Her handbook, *Cable Access: Community Channels and Productions for Nonprofits*, was published by the Benton Foundation. Ms. Nicholson was instrumental in the launch of Chicago's cable access channels, CAN-TV Network.

When I got the email from Matt Schuster announcing that I would be receiving the George Stoney Award, I was so excited that I immediately forwarded the message to many of my friends and colleagues. One of the first people to reply was Steve Kapelke, provost of Columbia College Chicago, where I am a faculty member in the Arts, Entertainment and Media Management Department. Steve told me that he had studied documentary filmmaking with George Stoney at New York University in the 1970s and he praised George's documentary, *All My Babies*, as a classic, reminding me once again that George, your influence is wide and deep among humanistic communicators everywhere. I am so honored to receive an award in your name.

I also heard back from other friends who congratulated me on receiving the award and added, "humanistic communications: what's that? Show us!"

I explained to them that humanistic communications is not so much about how I communicate, but more about the work that I have done—and that we are all doing—to invite, encourage, facilitate, support, celebrate, and amplify the self-expression and interaction of others.

In some of my classes on management and leadership at Columbia College Chicago, I show excerpts from a 1957 film, *Twelve Angry Men*. We have a very diverse student population, so I have to warn my students that the jury of twelve white men is going to look a bit dated. But *Twelve Angry Men* is a rich text, as we academics like to say, because it shows one lone juror—not the jury foreman, judge, or designated leader—who listens, asks questions, and invites silent members to speak. He pursues the issues through the anger and confusion of the process until each juror has contributed his uniquely valuable information and the group has reached its best decision.

I like to think that our work as humanistic communicators is similar to that of the lone juror in *Twelve Angry Men*. We believe that the contribution of many voices will lead to better decisions. We value not just a diverse society, but a diverse society in which people are invited and encouraged to contribute and to listen to one another. We believe that free expression—in all types of communication: analog, digital, virtual, and interpersonal—will lead to better solutions and a better future.

As proof of my long devotion to the ideals of this organization, I brought along a flyer for the first conference of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers, which I helped to organize in Madison, Wisconsin, in July 1978. George Stoney was our keynote speaker. Even then we were concerned about challenges to cable access and community media. Times are always tough for visionaries and idealists—and that would include all of us. But one of the many things we've learned from George is to keep going.

I'm grateful to the Alliance for Community Media for this award, for George Stoney, for all of my friends and colleagues, and for the fact that I met my husband, Steve Cosgrove, at a board meeting in Portland, Oregon, many years ago. For those of you who are considering board service, I have to admit that there can be added benefits.

The Japanese have a phrase for a type of communication that takes place without words, from one heart to another: *ishin-denshin*. What I value deeply about this organization, and about my relationship with George Stoney and all of you, is this heart-to-heart communication, the foundation of all humanistic communications. In that spirit and with great gratitude, I accept this award.



# Hometown Video Awards Honor Excellence in Community Media Programming and Operations

■ BY DEBORAH VINSEL

**T**he Alliance for Community Media celebrated the 31st year of the Hometown Video Awards with a gala awards presentation on July 10, 2008. Nearly 1,100 entries were received this year from media producers representing than 30 states and two Canadian provinces.

The Hometown Video Awards recognize excellence in community television programs and access center operations. Awards are presented to professional, nonprofessional, and youth producers for programming in 40 categories, with Overall Excellence awards presented to Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) and combined PEG access centers in three budget divisions. This year, 116 entries were honored as winners in their categories, with an additional 15 programs receiving Honorable Mention recognition.

Thirty-seven organizations submitted entries in the Overall Excellence categories, 11 organizations were recognized with the 2008 Overall Excellence Award. Entrants in the Overall Excellence categories were required to submit a sample of programming from their channels and complete a questionnaire about their operations. Each entry was reviewed by a panel of five judges who considered four criteria: how well the organization demonstrated its value to the community it serves; the effectiveness of its training, outreach and community involvement; the extent to which a diversity of messages and voices were included in the programming on their channels; how well the entry demonstrated the use of access media as an effective communications resource for their constituents.

Four awards were presented for Overall Excellence in Public Access. There was a tie in one budget division:

- Budget less than \$200,000  
**TV3 Medford**, Medford, Massachusetts
- Budget \$200,001 to \$499,999  
**The Public Access Television Corporation**, Lake Success, New York
- Budget more than \$500,000  
**Arlington Independent Media**, Arlington, Virginia
- Budget more than \$500,000  
**Cambridge Community Television**, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Two awards were presented for Overall Excellence in Educational Access:

- Budget less than \$200,000  
**Cambridge Educational Access**, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- Budget \$200,001 to \$499,999  
**Lowell Educational Television**, Lowell, Massachusetts
- Budget more than \$500,000  
no entries

Three awards were presented for Overall Excellence in Governmental Access:

- Budget less than \$200,000  
**Edison TV**, Edison, New Jersey
- Budget \$200,001 to \$499,999  
**Rainier Media Center**, Lakewood, Washington
- Budget more than \$500,000  
**Fairfax County Government Channel 16**, Fairfax, Virginia

Three awards were presented for Overall Excellence in Combined PEG Access

- Budget less than \$200,000  
**Scotch Plains Television**, Scotch Plains, New Jersey
- Budget \$200,001 to \$499,999  
**Germantown Community Television**, Germantown, Tennessee
- Budget more than \$500,000  
**KOCT—Oceanside Community Television**, Oceanside, California

More than 1,000 access programs produced in 2007 were submitted in 40 different categories. Some categories are for program genre, like Entertainment Talk Show, while others, like Empowerment or Democracy in Action, are geared to the content or impact of the program. Producers are separated into professional, non-professional, and youth, and programs are judged as a group based on the producer division. Although technical execution is

## Hometown Video Awards (*continued*)

considered, the majority of points are given for effective message, creativity, and content.

The winners in the individual program categories for 2008 are:

### ABOUT ACCESS

- *BTV 20 Years of History*, Alicia Fortin, Bridgewater, Massachusetts
- *Corporate Media vs. Public Access*, Jeff Dinnell and Kathy Bisbee, Santa Cruz, California

### ACCESS-ABLE

- *Ablevision*, Alisa Brugnoli, Annie Middleton, and the Crew of Ablevision, Malden, Massachusetts

### ACCESS PROGRAM PROMO

- *Luigi Board Promo (La Cuisine Du Garage)*, John Ash and Mark Meddaugh, West Allis, Wisconsin
- *Saints Baseball Promo*, David Schulte, Roseville, Minnesota
- *The Flying Circus Club*, Joe Cox, Tucson, Arizona

### CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

- *The King Henry Show*, Guy R. Zoda, Staten Island, New York
- *Channel 21 Fun Factory*, HOM-TV Staff and Interns, Okemos, Michigan
- *Storytime*, GHS-TV, Germantown, Tennessee

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

- *Try Bicycling!* Stan Ng and Don Burnett, Palo Alto, California
- *Altweels Festival Video*, Bruce Petschek and Lynn Weissman, Seven Generations Video, Somerville, Massachusetts
- *Rickenbacker Air Show*, Andrew Igdaloff and Ryan Engel, Gahanna, Ohio

### COMPUTER ANIMATION

- *MTN Station ID's Word Series 2*, John Akre, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- *Doll's Day*, Kayla Flam, Riverside, Illinois

### CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

- *Beltway Bistros: Spain*, George Ramick, Rockville, Maryland
- *Kindred*, Scott Howe, Sacramento, California
- *A Moment in Lowell*, Reinaldo Rivera, Lowell, Massachusetts

### DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

- *Presidential Candidate Mike Huckabee: A Visit To Londonderry*, Alan Sypek, Londonderry, New Hampshire
- *Fifth Congressional District Candidates' Forum*, Eric Stevenson, Bryan Wilkins, Nick Valcanas, and Jack Pinard, Lowell, Massachusetts

### DOCUMENTARY EVENT

- *The Search for the U.S.S. Grunion*, Joe Hunter, Newton, Massachusetts
- *Celebrate! 100 Years*, KCOM-TV, Piedmont, California

### DOCUMENTARY PROFILE

- *NUTV Documentary School*, Tinu Sinha and Michelle Wong, Calgary, Alberta
- *Assembly Square: Past, Present & Future*, Steven J. DeCarlo, Somerville, Massachusetts
- *Groton Trails: A Guide to our Town's Ten Best*, Heather Hoglund, Groton, Massachusetts

### DOCUMENTARY PUBLIC AWARENESS

- *Autism: The Wall That Knows No Limits*, Mike Peden, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- *Community Inclusion Program*, Sid Lee and Marc Pease, Lakewood, Washington
- *Nobody Knows Us*, Max Lewontin, Cambridge, Massachusetts

### EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- *CRLS Student Photo Show*, Amy Mertl, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- *Play On Words*, Edward Senyk, Port Huron, Michigan
- *Oliver Twist*, Aubrey Seader, Caleb Baechfold, Amber Beaty, and Chance Lowry, Bloomington, Indiana

### EDUCATIONAL CLASS PROJECT K-12

- *Umbrella Video*, GHS-TV, Germantown, Tennessee
- *Son of History*, GHS-TV, Germantown, Tennessee

### EDUCATIONAL PROFILE

- *A Day In The Life*, Vera Elliott, Rockville, Maryland
- *What's Inside Me*, Naomi Ture, Mountain View, California
- *SMI 2007 Documentary*, Laura Asherman, Cambridge, Massachusetts

### EMPOWERMENT

- *Youth Intern Program 2007 Television Special*, SPNN Youth Interns, Saint Paul, Minnesota
- *Dying for a Drink*, Jarrod Fry, Medina, Ohio

### ENTERTAINMENT TALK SHOW

- *In Depth with Konyka Dunson: Independent Women Shaking Up the Music Industry*, Konyka M.B. Dunson, Washington, District of Columbia
- *NEAL'S PLACE: Keeping The Blues Alive*, Kenny Neal, Palo Alto, California
- *Ats à la Carte*, GHS-TV, Germantown, Tennessee

### ENTERTAINMENT VARIETY

- *The Quiet Generation Presents*, Zach Martin and Quentin James, Cambridge, Maryland
- *The Intern Carol (SF #171)*, HOM-TV Staff and Interns, Okemos, Michigan
- *Media Week 2007 at NewTV*, Joella Tepper, David Mokriski, Melinda Gordon, and Nick Palm, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts

### GAY/LESBIAN

- *Outlook Video #230, Pride Edition*, Kim Lawson, Eric Chong, and Raymond Donald Hong, Mountain View, California
- *Being Lisa*, Becca Louisell, Sacramento, California

### GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

- *Union County MusicFest '07*, William McMeekan, Jr., Scotch Plains, New Jersey

- *Office of Human Rights "Discrimination,"* OCT TV-16, Washington, District of Columbia

#### GOVERNMENT PROFILE

- *Library News: Library Resource Sharing Program,* Laurie Hogan, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts
- *DOH Animal Disease Control,* OCT TV-16, Washington, District of Columbia
- *Spotlight,* GHS-TV, Germantown, Tennessee

#### INFORMATIONAL FEATURE

- *Arts & Crafts: Food for the Soul,* Tom Gradzewicz, Methuen, Massachusetts
- *It's Worth It,* David Zierott, St Paul, Minnesota

#### INFORMATIONAL TALK SHOW

- *What's Up Wit That? The Fifth Grade Buzz,* Andrew T. Willyoung and Loretta Beavers, Sunnyvale, California
- *Shelby County Schools Report—"Parent Teacher Association,"* GHS-TV, Germantown, Tennessee
- *Twenty Bucks or Less for the Cheap Gamer,* Bryan Smaller and Ryan Chodora, Riverside, Illinois

#### INNOVATIVE

- *The Mireless Wic Show,* Christopher Lange and Steven Onderick, White Bear Lake, Minnesota
- *The Mental Health News Hour,* Dan Bennett, Olympia SW, Washington
- *City in Motion,* Max Lewontin, Cambridge, Massachusetts

#### INSTRUCTIONAL/TRAINING

- *Indian Vegetarian Gourmet,* Hema Kundargi, Cupertino, California
- *It's Worth It,* David Zierott, St. Paul, Minnesota
- *School Safety,* Ollie Skelton, Jordan Powell and Hannah Anderson, Bloomington, Indiana

#### LIVE FORMAT

- *NUTV Sports Coverage: Dinos Basketball,* Tim Mooney, Michelle Wong, Alex Mitchell, and Tinu Sinha, Calgary, Alberta
- *LIVE Football: Centennial at Coon Rapids,* CTN Studios, Coon Rapids, Minnesota
- *2007 Lowell Folk Festival,* Dee Welch, Rob Wall, Joe Couturie, Lauren LaPointe, and Div Kuy, Lowell, Massachusetts

#### LOCAL PERFORMANCES

- *Union County MusicFest '07,* William McMeekan, Jr., Scotch Plains, New Jersey
- *A Little New Music, episode #7,* Alvaro Calabia, Susan Gardiner, and Eugene Saunders, Rockville, Maryland
- *Alice In DiscoLand,* SKHS Video Students, Port Orchard, Washington

#### MAGAZINE SHOWS

- *La Verne Exclusive,* Angela Gangie and Megan Montalvo, La Verne, California
- *Washington Full Circle,* OCT TV-16, Washington, District of Columbia
- *From The Corps,* Frank J. Crum, Tampa, Florida

#### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- *EQUAL ACCESS Sign Language Television: "Our Advocate,"* Theresa DuBois, Great Neck, New York
- *HIV/AIDS: The Nation & The World,* National Media Consortium, Inc., Washington, District of Columbia
- *Wise Boyz,* Dawn and Larry Natalia, Medford, Massachusetts
- *Broken Voices,* Ralph Rollins, JaKira Williams, and Shaquita Johnson, Chicago, Illinois

#### MUSIC VIDEO

- *The Black Man Clay Show,* Eric Heithaus, Tucson, Arizona
- *Fuerst Farm Family Day 2007,* Hans Ihlenfeldt, Farmington, Michigan
- *Skater's Dream,* Troy Sparks and David Shiu, Bloomington, Indiana

#### NEWS

- *Outlook Video #227,* Kim Lawson, Mountain View, California
- *Pierce County News/PCN Best of 2007,* Rainier Media Center, Lakewood, Washington
- *Wake Up Germantown,* GHS-TV, Germantown, Tennessee

#### ORIGINAL TELEPLAY

- *Deadly Access,* Kathryn Robinson, Wallingford, Connecticut
- *PC Noir,* Dawn Natalia and Sean Carroll, Medford, Massachusetts
- *A Stranger at the Window,* Bailey Foust, Jessica Richardson, and Alex Goodman, Bloomington, Indiana

#### PSAS

- *Monitor Your Kids,* Joseph Valencia, Ray Kaptur, Evan Mobley, and Adrianna Castillo, La Verne, California
- *School Zone Safety,* Randy Olson, Charleen Burnette, and Jon Rauch, Bremerton, Washington
- *Suicide Prevention,* Jordan Perry, Port Orchard, Washington

#### SENIORS

- *Elder Abuse and Senior Scams,* Middlesex County Dept. on Aging & Piscataway Community TV
- New Brunswick, New Jersey
- *Coming of Age,* Joanne Fisher and Jesse Kreitzer, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts

#### SHORT SUBJECT

- *SPADE: A Critical Look At Black America,* Yolanda Young, Washington, District of Columbia
- *Dying for a Drink,* Jarrod Fry, Medina, Ohio
- *Illumination,* Jette Pleasant, Riverside, Illinois

#### SPIRITUAL / INSPIRATIONAL

- *Jesus Christ, My Anti-Drug,* Maya Munson, Lowell, Massachusetts
- *National Day of Prayer,* Access Tucson, Tucson, Arizona

## Hometown Video Awards (*continued*)

### SPORTS COVERAGE

- **Bombers Football**, Luke Uttaro, Jack Dugan, and Derek Callahan, Ithaca, New York
- **Montgomery College Baseball**, Michael Brown, Scott Youngblood, and Stan Jones, Rockville, Maryland
- **HoopsHIGH**, Chris Frills, Marshaun Williams, and Jasmine Boyce, Chicago, Illinois

### SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT

- **Vertical Mnids**, Chelsea Sherier, La Verne, California
- **Sportsnight**, CTN Studios, Coon Rapids, Minnesota
- **Reaching for Gold**, Jon Garabedian, Lowell, Massachusetts

### VISUAL ARTS

- **SculptureNow on Main Street 2007**, Ann Jon, SculptureNow, South Lee, Massachusetts
- **Art History Cultural Mask Project**, Bryan Wilkins, Lowell, Massachusetts

### WEBSITE FOR PRODUCERS

- **www.BonnieTV.com**, Bonnie D. Graham, Great Neck, New York

### WEBSITE FOR ACCESS CENTERS

- **www.ncctv.org**, Lyle Anderson, Carrie Krams, Chappaqua, New York
- **VCAM website (www.vermontcam.org)**, Seth Mobley and the VCAM staff, Burlington, Vermont

In several instances, the judges asked for programs to be given special recognition. While these programs were not the winners in their categories, the judges felt that the producer's effort warranted an Honorable Mention.

### ABOUT ACCESS

- **MCTV 15th Anniversary Connecting You to Your Community**, Grace Sullivan, Mary Tenn, Audra Jennings, and Kathy Masso, Manchester, New Hampshire

### CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

- **MCPL Summer Reading Program 2007—Clue B. Doo: Get a Clue**, CATS-Martin O'Neill, Bloomington, Indiana

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

- **Auction 2007**, Lee Driver and Emily Singleton, Germantown, Tennessee

### DOCUMENTARY PROFILE

- **Leo Jodoin, Salem Now, and Again**, Paul K. Bisson, Salem, Massachusetts

### ENTERTAINMENT TALK SHOW

- **Peninsula Seniors Lecture Series: Marthe Cohn —Behind Enemy Lines**, Betty and Jarel Wheaton, Torrance, California

### GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

- **Kids Serve Too**, Pamela Gardner, Fairfax, Virginia
- **Wastewater Management**, Fran Guastadisegni, Fairfax, Virginia

### GOVERNMENT PROFILE

- **When Do I Need a Building Permit?** Brian Hamilton, Fairfax, Virginia

### INFORMATIONAL TALK SHOW

- **Forward Motion**, Karen Allyn, Rockville, Maryland
- **On the Money with NEDAP**, NEDAP Staff, New York, New York

### LOCAL PERFORMANCES

- **Mount Hood Pops Christmas Concert 2007**, Gary Thompson, Emily Vidal, and Keith Thomas, Gresham, Oregon

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- **Could this be You?** Naomi Ture and Brian Szabo, Mountain View, California

### SHORT SUBJECT

- **George Washington's Mount Vernon**, Patrick Balsamo, Fairfax, Virginia

### WEBSITE FOR ACCESS CENTERS

- **www.pctv21.org**, Monica C. Hughes, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

This year, more than 70 access organizations around the United States volunteered as judging sites, recruiting more than 300 people to serve as judges. It is a monumental task, and the Hometown management is ever grateful for their participation and support.

Congratulations to all the winners. We look forward to seeing your work again in 2009. ■CMR



As a 25-year member of the Alliance, Deborah Vinsel has served on the Central States, Western Region, and Northwest regional boards and on the National Board of Directors. In 1999, the Alliance recognized her commitment to the organization by honoring her with the Buske Leadership Award. In 2003, she was co-chair of the local planning committee for the national conference held in Tacoma, Washington. In addition to serving as the interim director of the Alliance from April to September 2008, Deborah also coordinates the Hometown Video Awards. Deborah has worked in community media since 1983, managing PEG access centers in three different states. She is currently the executive director at Thurston Community Television in Olympia, Washington.





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# Keynote *Comments*

The Alliance featured a panel of distinguished PEG advocates during our Keynote Lunch event on Saturday, July 12. The panel included: Amy Goodman, host of the popular *Democracy Now!* program; Gloria Tristani, former FCC Commissioner; Kojo Nnamdi, host of the *Kojo Nnamdi Show* on WAMU; and Mark Lloyd, Vice-President of Strategic Initiatives at the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. The Alliance is pleased to present excerpts from this inspiring panel discussion.

## Amy Goodman

It's absolutely wonderful to be with you here today and to be with our guest speakers for this luncheon. Independent media is absolutely critical in this time of war. A week ago, I was at the Aspen Institute in Aspen, Colorado. And, I don't know if John Masters is here from Aspen Community Television, the oldest community TV station in the country, but they hosted us for two days. We did their first global TV/Radio/Internet broadcast, the first one they had ever done. And, it was amazing to be there, not at an ABC or NBC or CBS studio, but to be in the middle of the community with community media. That is its power.

I was also on a panel—the contrasts are interesting—with a group of pundits we often see on all of the networks. You know those pundits who know so little about so much, explaining the world to us and getting it so wrong, talking about the horse race. You represent something very different. You represent a forum for

grassroots voices in your community that are essential to the functioning of a democratic society. The fact that public access TV is under attack is unacceptable and we must all fight back.

How is it possible, when digital capacity is exploding, when the costs of doing video, the tools of video production are actually decreasing,



Amy Goodman

how is it that public access TV is facing its greatest challenge? Well, that is simply an opportunity for us to join together and demand that the public be included in the public discussion in this country that is absolutely essential, not only for this country, but because we are the most powerful country on earth, what you do, whether this battle succeeds for public access TV, is a model for media all over the world. The stakes are very high. I see the media as a huge kitchen table that stretches across the globe that we all sit around and debate and discuss the most important issues of the day—war and peace, life and death. And, anything less than that is a disservice to the

service members of this country who can't decide whether they will be sent to kill or be killed. They can't have these debates on military bases. They rely on us and civilian society to have these discussions. Anything less than that global kitchen table is a disservice to a democratic society.

We have three speakers today. We're going to begin with Kojo Nnamdi, who is the host of the *Kojo Nnamdi Show*, a live talk show produced at WAMU here in the nation's capital weekdays at noon. He also hosts the *Politics Hour* as well, and is seen on WHUT, the Howard University television, eight o'clock on Fridays, and on Sundays as well with the *Evening Exchange with Kojo*. One of the projects he is spearheading after the conventions will be *Kojo In Your Community*, going around to talk about the communities of this country or hearing from the communities of the world. He's talking about really the communities in the most powerful capital on Earth, right?—the nation's capital, Washington, and its surroundings. *Kojo In Your Community* is his latest project. He'll begin the discussion.

## Kojo Nnamdi

Thank you very much. Good afternoon. I have a daily routine in which I drive to work between eight and nine in the morning, when WPFW radio is airing *Democracy Now!* It's a three-step routine. One, turn on the radio. Two, find *Democracy Now!* Three, steal ideas. And, it works very well. *Democracy Now!* offers such a wide variety of ideas that there is all this food for thought and discussion there. I am also given to quoting intellectuals. So, allow me to start with Frantz Fanon who said, "It is the role of each generation, out of relative obscurity, to discover its mission and either fulfill it or betray it." I suggest that, for this generation to discover its mission in an increasingly sophisticated global economy, is a very difficult task and we have to apply ourselves to that task very diligently.

But, there are two things we know. One is that, as a socio-economic system, capitalism tends invariably toward monopoly. And, we can see that manifesting itself clearly in the media today. The second thing we know is that people who are in the business of media and broadcasting for the purpose of making a profit, for the purpose of satisfying the desires of their shareholders, do not like the idea of giving anything away. And, because we know those two things, it helps us, I think, to understand our mission a little better.

When I first became Chair of the Public Access Corporation in the District of Columbia in a previous

millennium, I thought that I had been recruited because I had broadcasting skills and because I had programming experience. And, then, I quickly discovered that that was not the reason that I had been recruited. This came home to me most forcefully when I found myself, along with our Executive Director, Nantz Rikard, conducting a two-person sit-in in the mayor's office in the District of Columbia in order to draw attention to our need for a new facility and the obstructions that we were encountering in obtaining that facility. I say that to say that in very many ways the future of paid access sits in this room today, that in fact, when we are confronted by an increasingly monopolistic media environment, a media environment that, as Amy pointed out in the beginning, is increasingly reluctant to give us the access that we should have to the airways that we own, we do have to find ourselves becoming increasingly sophisticated in our organization in order to combat that.

We do have to find ourselves becoming increasingly involved in the political process on the one hand to make sure that elected officials, both at the local level and at the national level, understand the priority, the immediacy, and the necessity of PEG access. And, we also have to be involved at the social level. We have to be politically active and we have to make it a social mandate in the same way that universal health care should



Kojo Nnamdi

be a social mandate, that there should be a social mandate. And, the only way we can do that is if we continue to be involved, if we understand increasingly the level of sophistication of the organization of commercial and mainstream

media, if we understand that we have to recruit more and more people to be a part of our movement in order to continue that fight, the future of PEG access starts in this room and expands exponentially.

### Amy Goodman:

Our next speaker is Gloria Tristani. She's now an attorney with a firm here, Spiegel & McDiarmid. Most significantly, she is a former Commissioner of the FCC, and was recently the President of the Benton Foundation. While an FCC Commissioner, Gloria Tristani advocated for minority ownership of broadcast properties, for equal employment opportunity roles, she also worked to accelerate broadband deployment to rural and other under-served areas, and advocating for the E-Rate Program, which provides discounted Internet access to schools and to libraries. She also served for a few years on the New Mexico State Corporation Commission, the first woman elected to that commission and its Chair in 1996. In 2002, she was the Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate in New Mexico. Spanish is her first language. Gloria Tristani...

## Gloria Tristani

I am a former FCC Commissioner and I'm not going to talk to you about the technical side of PEG or producing. I don't know anything about that. But, I am going to talk to you about how you make your voices heard in the political world, in the halls of the Congress, which I know you've been doing this week, and at the FCC because that's something I know a little bit about.

I like to tell the story—and Mark Lloyd, who you'll hear from next, knows this story because he lobbied me when I was at the FCC. I was there from 1997 to 2001 in another era. I never counted, but, I would say, of 100 visits a week from lobbyists, there were maybe two from what I call the public interest. Truly, truly. And, even with the resurgence in interest in these matters, I bet you it's maybe 5 of 100. You are under-represented at the FCC and you probably know that. But, what I'm here to tell you is that there's no need for you to be under-represented there. I saw a lot of hands when they said how many people visited the Hill. Could I see how many hands of people who visited the FCC this week? (Several hands go up.)

Okay. And, congratulations to you that did. Now, you might say, "Why should we visit the FCC when they've been stepping on us of late?" Well, let's start with there were two commissioners who did everything they could—and are still doing everything they can—on behalf of PEG. And,

the other three, you can't let them off the hook. You have to go there and let them know that they've done the wrong things. And, you have to go there with a positive message that you have a wonderful and unique product that no one else is producing. I mean I don't know of any commercial media that has a program in Spanish to give the Spanish-speaking community, which is made up mostly of immigrants, any kind of advice or help. I don't know of any other in this region. There may be others, but I don't know of any commercial program that does that.

So, my message is—it's very, very simple. It's you have to be at the doors. And, I know you can't come to Washington all the time. But, you know what? FCC Commissioners travel quite a bit and their schedules are supposed to be public. So, if you hear they're in town for some hearing or meeting, demand to see them. They are there, they're appointed to guard the nation's airwaves, everything that has to do with communications, everything that's important to you, and they're not there to represent industry. It's not the Federal Communications Business Commission, although sometimes it might seem that. It's the Federal Communications Commission, with a mission to serve, first and foremost, the public interests and to further localism, diversity, and competition.

So, you have to absolutely make it your mission from today on to stay—you know, there's this Keep Us



Gloria Tristani

Connected [campaign]. Stay connected or start getting connected to the FCC because in addition to the world as we know it, the world's going to change in January. It may be better. It may not be a lot better. But, the FCC will change. So, there will

be some opportunities and you have to be ready to seize those opportunities. I know you've been talking about that. I know I've heard about putting together a program for the Hill, for the Capitol Hill, on what you need from the Capitol. But, you know what? Even under the best scenario in January after the elections, it's not going to be easy because if you're redoubling your efforts—and I hate to call it the other side—industry, commercial media, will be redoubling their efforts on how to stop anything positive happening for your community. So, you need to work very hard on that.

When you make those visits, whether they're on the Hill, or to the Commission, speak from the *corazon*—speak from the heart. Take good examples. If you have programming you can show them, show it to them. I've heard a lot of passion here today. Take that passion with you. I mean commissioners are human beings. Congresspeople are human beings. They are moved by the unique stories. Make it relevant to them. Some of them don't have any clue what PEG access is. Some of them have never been invited to be on PEG access. All political people love to be on TV, including PEG access, it's part of



their being. So, get them on. Get the commissioners on as well. They love to have exposure. I know. I've been there. I like to be asked to be on programming and talk about the issues that are important.

I'm going on for too long, but I cannot stress enough on how you should be connected. And, don't just go to visit the FCC and the Congress people when you're playing defense and when you have a problem. Go and keep them advised all the time. Give them good stories. They don't want to hear just the problems; they want to hear the good things. So, it's a constant process. It's constant work. You're going to say you don't have the resources. This—I can't tell you enough. You ought to know it, that PEG is under attack. We just had a terrible court decision, so you're not going to be able to depend on the courts to fix things. I mean who knows? There might be a miracle in the making. Don't count on it. So, you've got to make your case before the Congress.

And, the last thing and I'll let Mark go on. There will be a new President. And, a lot of people are making assumptions it might be this guy or that guy. You can't make any assumptions. You've got to be prepared for either scenario. I don't know if anybody in the ACM community has drafted something to submit to either the Democratic Platform Committee or the Republican Platform Committee that includes PEG. I don't know. I just thought about that. If you haven't, get it before the Platform Committees. You've got to let them know you're alive. No one else

is going to do it for you. No one else is going to do it for you. It's wonderful to work with allies in the media advocacy community, but at the end of the day, you are the best and you are the only spokespeople for PEG. So, make those voices heard. Make them heard from the *corazon*—from the heart. And, I'd be happy to talk more about that.

### **Amy Goodman:**

Mark Lloyd will speak next. He's vice president of strategic initiatives at the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. He's also an affiliate professor of Public Policy at Georgetown University, and has written the book, *Prologue to a Farce: Communication and Democracy in America*. It says, "inspired by Madison's observation that a popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy or perhaps both." Mark Lloyd has crafted a complex, powerful assessment of the relationship between communications and Democracy in the United States. In *Prologue to a Farce*, Mark argues that citizens' political capabilities depend on broad access to media technologies, but that the U.S. communications environment has become unfairly dominated by corporate interests. Mark Lloyd...

## **Mark Lloyd**

Thank you Amy. Can you hear me? It's really wonderful to be here. There was a dream of cable. It started out community antenna television as you probably all know. And, a guy named Nick Johnson had the notion that somehow we were going to be able to combine closed-circuit television and community antenna TV. And, maybe we'd have as many as 12 or 15 channels, and that all sorts of voices in communities that were locked out of the three major networks—if you had three, and maybe public television—that all sorts of voices would be heard, that we'd be able to hear from educational officials and from government officials. And, maybe there'd even be a place for the public to come and speak on cable. That was a vision of cable maybe 20, 30 years ago—was it that long ago? Yeah.

One of the advantages was that you couldn't get cable without permission from local officials. You had to dig up the streets, you had to use public roadways, you had to use the rooftops, that somehow in order to be able to get to all those communities, you had to go to each local community to get officials, who were elected and paid for by the public—consumers we like to call you—that you needed to get the permission of the local community in order to get your market. So, the local folks had all this power and the dream of cable was assured. It was guaranteed. What happened? I mean how could it possibly be that something that giant corporations have to go to the local community to get permission to use your

streets and rooftops to get a franchise agreement, how could it be that the place where the public comes to speak could have any trouble at all?

Oh, well, listen. Let's not worry about it because we're going to have a new election, and a new President, and all this is going to be fixed. Not only will we have a post-racial environment, we will have a post-problem environment. Right? All this is going to be solved with a new administration.

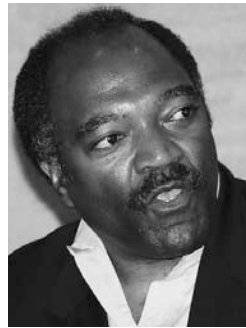
Hmm. The dreams that we had of cable are now dreams about the Internet. The Internet is going to be this vibrant place. You're going to be able to get *Democracy Now!* and *Kojo Nnamdi*, and maybe even read some of Gloria's papers and her speeches from the old FCC. And, the Internet is going to be this amazing tool. And, like, why worry about public access? Okay. Why worry—the Internet's going to solve all these problems, just like cable is going to solve all the problems of the three major networks, like television was going to solve the problems of radio, like radio was going to solve the problems of the newspapers.

How could we be here? As Amy said, I think as Kojo and Gloria sort of ratified, we really don't have a democracy. We don't have a place where we can discuss issues that are important for us. We don't have a local, much less a national or an international kitchen table, if we are not able to come together to discuss our common problems of inequality in America which seems to be increasing, of lack of healthcare services, of young men and women losing their lives in a war that no one can really explain. How

could we be here when you've got the power in your local communities to make sure that cable doesn't even get from household to household? Right? Those are public streets that they have to use. Right?

The rules matter. I was on television for a number of years and I paid no attention to the fact that there were rules there that created an environment where people had to actually find people like me to go into communities to talk to people in church basements, in migrant fields, and community shelters to find out what they were interested in and to make sure those programs were put on commercial television. It was called ascertainment—come and gone. All right. The rules matter. The rules matter. And, once you get the rules, you must fight everyday to make sure that those rules work for you. The moment that you decide that your public interest can be left to folks who have a very clear interest of making money, that you can wait, that things are fine, you will lose. The moment that you decide that you don't have to fight anymore to advance something, or that some new technology is going to solve the problem, the moment you decide that you can rest, that you don't have to put the energy into it, you have lost.

But, it's not just you who have lost. If you are unable to create an ability where you can have that local or national, that state or that global kitchen table, you end up in a war that you don't want. You end up with a healthcare system that doesn't make sense to you. The results of the lack of a coherent and intelligent communications policy that supports a democracy



Mark Lloyd

are too evident, despite the fact that we have a black man named Barack Obama running for President, despite the fact that we've got really someone who was a Republican maverick, who helped to push campaign finance reform bills, and bucked his party in many

ways—despite the fact that we've got these folks running for President, this democracy I would argue is in trouble, and at least as much trouble as PEG access is.

What happened to the dream of cable? I would strongly urge you to remember at least a few of the victories. One of the few victories of the communications reform movement was the fact that, despite Ronald Reagan's enormous and amazing popularity, and the fact that you had this juggernaut in the Hill supporting Reagan and then the first Bush, we were able to get a cable bill passed that supported the ability of local communities to demand public access operations. And, that bill was passed over the veto of Reagan and then over the veto of Bush. Imagine that. And, it was my former boss, the Clinton administration, that signed into law something that sort of did away with that victory in the 1996 Telecommunications Act because they didn't stop fighting, because the cable companies didn't stop fighting, and they're not going to stop fighting tomorrow, whoever is in the White House.

So, we have to keep fighting, and we have to be very practical. One of the things that I write about in my book is—I write a bit about public access operations. But, I also write a good deal about Barbara Popovic's operation at Chicago Access Network. And, what I think they do that's

very, very smart is that they don't just let people come in, although they let people come in. They go out and make sure that they are reaching out into their community, that they are making sure that the ACLU and a wide variety of other groups know that there's an opportunity to come and use their operation to speak and put programs on. They help. They teach. They train. They make sure that those voices understand how to use the platforms that are available. And, not only do they reach out to the so-called nonprofit—what a horrible word. Not only do they reach out to social justice organizations in local communities, but they also make sure that there's a place for the local politicians in the communities. And, so, the local politicians are in a position where they understand how important access is.

It's extraordinarily important to provide opportunities for free expression. Please, please use that medium that you have, as Gloria suggested, to make sure that you do establish the kitchen table in your local community, that you put on the local and global programs, such as Amy's, that you do things to make sure that you get your communities to understand that the service that you provide is vital. And, what they're going to do is they're going to work to make sure that your signal is degraded, that it doesn't look as pretty, and you've got to fight those battles. They're going to work to make sure that the studio that you've got isn't as attractive as the studio that you had maybe five years ago, that the money runs out. They're going to make the connections tougher for you once they move to fiber or Internet platforms. They're going to do all those things and you've got to fight all those battles. You cannot allow any of those seemingly small rules to just sort of go by

the wayside because they harm you. They harm your ability to connect.

What happened to the dream of cable? So, in many ways, it's the same dream that we have of America. In many ways, it's the same dream that we can really have a place where we can discuss issues that are important to us and that my voice is really as important, as viable—if I can make any sense at all—as the voice from Mobil, or as the voice from AT&T, or as the voice from Comcast, or as the voice from almost any other corporation that you can imagine. The way that we set our system up in America was that political quality meant the ability to communicate equally which is what the U.S. Post Office was going to do for us, the most advanced system in the world. We are very, very far away from what it was that our structure established.

What happened to the dream of cable? It's the same thing that happened to the dream of America. And, we've got to fight for them both and we cannot rest or assume that any one election, any one win, or any one loss is going to be the end of that story. I look forward to your questions. Thank you very much.

### **Amy Goodman**

*Democracy Now!* broadcasts around the world on public access stations here, community radio stations, PBS, NPR stations, on the Web. We video and audio podcast and air on stations all over. A listener was listening to a broadcast in Sydney, Australia on Radio Skid Row and called in and said, "How is it possible that the poorest station in Australia has the best coverage of the war?" But, I think we can come back here to this country with this. What is it about public access that gives it the richest coverage? It's all of you and the forum you provide for all of the people in your

community. It is so important. I mean because those marginalized communities, people who are opposed to war, people who are opposed to torture, people who are speaking for their own communities, are not a fringe minority. They're not a silent majority, but the silenced majority—silenced by the corporate media. Which is why we have to take the media back, and you are in the most powerful position to do that. You rallying your constituencies.

Folks are going to be here to talk to you afterwards. I'm going to go to the back and sign some books. The last one I wrote with my brother, David, called—well, the book's title, *Standing Up to the Madness*, I think it represents what we have to do now—ordinary people in extraordinary times. It's all the people in all of our communities. And, we begin and end the book with a story of a brother and sister in Nazi Germany named Hans and Sophie Scholl. They weren't Jewish. They were German Christians. And, they thought what can we do in the face of the Nazi atrocity? And, they thought the best they could do was get out information so that the Germans would never be able to say we didn't know. So, they started, together with their professor, to publish a series of pamphlets. And, they'd see these pamphlets ... all over the country, giving voice to the people who weren't being heard. And, the fourth of the six pamphlets said across the front, "We will not be silent."

Well, the Gestapo caught Hans and Sophie. They caught them. They charged them. They tried them. And, they convicted them. And, they beheaded them. But, that philosophy, that motto should be the Hippocratic Oath for media today, of public access stations today. And, that is, we will not be silent. *Democracy Now!* ■CMR

# Alliance for Community Media's Equal Opportunity Caucus

## Ensuring Inclusiveness & Diversity at All Levels of ACM

■ BY TONYA GONZALEZ

**The value of the Equal Opportunity Caucus cannot be overstated.**

For the last three years, the Equal Opportunity (EO) Caucus has been centered on the notion that everyone is part of equal opportunity: no voice should be left out or marginalized. For a national organization that represents the interests of millions of people who, through their local religious, community and charitable groups, use PEG access to communicate with their memberships and the community as a whole, the value of the EO Caucus cannot be overstated.

### History

The caucus was created in the 1990s as a sort of reaction to the limited diversity within the Alliance for Community Media, at all levels of the organization. The EO Caucus is made up of ACM members from across the U.S. Historically, during ACM's annual conference, the members convene the caucus for the purpose of reviewing ACM activity as it relates to Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity policies. The caucus also recommends a candidate for the Equal Opportunity Representative position to the ACM Board of Directors. The caucus is open to any ACM member. According to the ACM Bylaws:

***The Equal Opportunity Committee shall be made up of at least one member from all other standing and ad hoc committees of the Board. The EO representative appointed by the Board shall chair the EO Committee.***

This structure allows ACM to have an integrated approach to ensuring inclusion—from the openness of the yearly caucus to the full representation on the board and among all the committees. During the last four years,

the structure has been enhanced to allow for greater accountability and transparency.

### Recent Accomplishments

Recent accomplishments of the EO Caucus include the development of a more organized approach to annual caucus meetings and the development of the core values statement, below.

### CORE VALUES STATEMENT

- Support the input of youth in our movement. Facilitate the broad representation of youth across all aspects of ACM
- Expand definition of diversity
- Work to develop/maintain an organization that reflects the makeup of our communities
- Reduce barriers to participation at all levels of our organization
- Support the exchange of information to facilitate participation in all areas of community media

In addition, the caucus created an annual *EO Resource Guide*. It also wrote bylaws for EO affiliates and obtained an Employer Identification Number (EIN) for EO, both of which will assist with obtaining affiliate status.

### Leadership

In 2008, the EO Caucus selected Jasmine White (a colleague at DCTV) to chair the EO Caucus and I will serve as co-chair. Jackie Steven will serve as secretary and Sunshine Dixon will serve as treasurer.

### Goals for 2008 to 2009

The 2008 EO Caucus identified a few key priorities for 2008 to 2009, including:



- EO will use online technology to increase communications in between the annual caucus meetings
- Update the *EO Resource Guide* based on feedback from the 2008 caucus
- Provide EO updates and ratings following annual ACM conferences to evaluate what worked well and what areas may need to be improved
- EO Track—pursue creating an EO track at the conference
- Create an EO page or section for *CMR*
- Increase caucus members' ability to network during the conference.

We welcome your ideas and feedback as we work to accomplish our goals.

I have served as the EO Representative for the last four years and it has been an absolute honor. Remember that EO truly means everyone—and it will take all of us to create a more just and fair society. ■**CMR**



Tonya Gonzalez is the Director of Community Affairs for DCTV, located in Washington, D.C. She serves on the national ACM Board of Directors and is the Equal Opportunity Chair. She received her JD from the University of Maryland School of Law and worked at PBS before joining DCTV. She resides in Washington, D.C.



# From the Community, to the Community: By Any Media Necessary

## An Overview of the Programming, Training, and Content Management Track at the 2008 Alliance for Community Media Conference and Trade Show

■ BY BETTY YU

**A**t the 2008 Alliance for Community Media Conference and Trade Show in Washington, D.C., the Programming, Training, and Content Management track gave attendees an opportunity to share methods of drawing out issues from diverse communities, and different ways of bringing these issues back to communities using a broad array of media and educational forms, going beyond our cable TV channels. The track encompassed a broad array of programmatic, training, and content issues that community media centers face on a day-to-day level across the country. The sessions sparked meaningful dialogue and created a forum for access centers to share their experiences and best practices. It also provided information, tools, and resources for implementation back at our respective centers. The conference also offered an opportunity to expose Alliance members to the training and programming strategies of other kinds of media centers, besides access centers, to help broaden our perspective and discourse.

As our centers strive to expand and improve our training models, embrace new technologies and media tools for distribution, and cultivate youth as media makers, we must hold steadfast to the mission of empowering and building community through

media—whatever tools they may be. The sessions in this conference track focused on some key areas and strategies that we hope centers will find useful and workable as we bring our field of community media to the next level:

- Community media centers are exploring new alternative training strategies and models. Some centers are employing project-based learning models that are student-centered, drawing from the life experiences of the participants. Some are also incorporating media literacy to provide tools for participants to deconstruct the corporate media.
- Access centers are working with producers to supplement their distribution methods beyond the channels by teaching them how to create their own video blogs and assisting them in building an audience online.
- Our centers are fostering a new generation of community media producers and media makers. Many access centers are acknowledging the powerful role that youth play, bringing creative perspectives and forward thinking to the community media field that goes beyond just the television medium.

- Centers are striving to be more responsive to the immediate needs of and current issues that are facing the communities they serve. A number of access centers are increasing programming based on social issues through creative community collaborations, curating locally-produced media, seeking pre-produced media that addresses communities' concerns, and diversifying their outreach to community-based social change movements.
- Public, educational, and government (PEG) centers are embracing new media tools for distribution. An increasing number of PEG organizations are transforming themselves into multimedia community centers, providing community producers with access to a full range of distribution platforms such as videoblogging, social networking, creating and disseminating DVDs, and sharing programming through file-sharing projects.

In "Increasing Social Justice Programming at Your Center," moderated by longtime community media veteran Rika Welsh, panelists discussed the different ways that PEG centers could expand their program-

matic potential in areas related to social justice. This session explored the role of access centers in amplifying social justice and local community issues in the face of increased media consolidation and a shrinking media environment for independent voices. Panelists from Manhattan Neighborhood Network, Seattle Community Access Network, and other access centers talked about how they have increased their programming based on social issues through creative community collaborations, proactively reaching out to traditionally marginalized communities, and seeking pre-produced media that speaks to the communities they serve.

Marshall Parker of SCAN TV in Seattle ([www.scantv.org](http://www.scantv.org)) talked about how their center has translated their training curriculum into Spanish and Chinese to meet the growing requests for media access by immigrant communities. Marshall expressed the importance of accessing the needs of local communities and of learning what their issues are in order to understand what role access centers can play in amplifying socially relevant messages.

Keali'I Lopez of 'Olelo Television in Hawaii ([www.olelo.org](http://www.olelo.org)) spoke about the role of their Community Access center in preserving the language, heritage and culture of Native Hawaiians throughout the Islands. 'Olelo Television's six community media centers located throughout the islands offer community members the opportunity to create programs by, for, and about their own communities.

When it was my turn to present, I spoke about how Manhattan Neighborhood Network ([www.mnn.org](http://www.mnn.org)) had diversified its outreach to community groups engaged in social change efforts through creative collaborations and facilitated productions (productions crewed by MNN staff). Currently, MNN is collaborating with community organizations in Manhattan that have been fighting displacement of low-income residents and people of color from their neighborhoods, particularly in the Lower East Side, East Harlem, and Central Harlem. MNN is partnering with the Coalition to Protect Chinatown and the Lower East Side and other groups in Harlem to produce a TV series called *New York Not for Sale* for cablecast on MNN's channels, to post the shows online, and to screen the videos around the city. I also shared a resource list of media organizations that generate social justice programming and make these shows available

to access centers at low to no costs (see sidebar, below).

The last speaker, Rivka Sadaragani of Portland Community Media ([www.pcmv.org](http://www.pcmv.org)) in Oregon, highlighted her center's efforts to build local partnerships. They worked in partnership with the Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program—a nonprofit coalition of 20 neighborhoods in southeast and northeast Portland—to help them use community media to advance their housing rights issues. Working with local homeless and housed community members, they produced the video *Transforming Homelessness in Portland: What Can You Do?* PCM also designed and implemented a custom media education program for Southeast Uplift staff and volunteers.

In another conference session, Program Sharing and New Distribution Platforms for Community Media Centers, participants learned about new forms of content distribution.

## RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PROGRAMMING

These media organizations provide social change themed programming that is either free or low-cost. Contact the groups directly for videos.

**Manhattan Neighborhood Network**, <http://www.mnn.org/en/socialjustice>

**Media Edge** created a two-hour video magazine program that showcases local and progressive voices, "We the Media," [www.wethemedia.tv](http://www.wethemedia.tv)

### Online Distribution Platform Resources

[www.blip.tv](http://www.blip.tv)  
[www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)  
[www.hub.witness.org](http://www.hub.witness.org)  
[www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)  
[www.utterz.com](http://www.utterz.com)  
[www.ning.com](http://www.ning.com)  
[www.vimeo.com](http://www.vimeo.com)  
[www.miro.com](http://www.miro.com)

### Resources for Media Literacy

New Mexico Media Literacy Project  
[www.nmmlp.org](http://www.nmmlp.org)

Center for Media Literacy  
[www.medialit.org](http://www.medialit.org)

Manhattan Neighborhood Network  
Youth Channel  
[www.mnn.org/en/medialiteracy](http://www.mnn.org/en/medialiteracy)

Carlos Pareja of Brooklyn Community Access Television opened the workshop by speaking about some of the new media classes offered by his center, Brooklyn Community Access Television, including Videoblogging 101, The Community of Online Video, and Emerging Web Technologies. He talked about how diverse communities can benefit from online tools for finding crew and talent or sharing and collaborating on content. Jennifer Wager of MNN presented on how innovative Web 2.0 portals (see sidebar) offer vast potential for content sharing and distribution. Wager also stressed the need for PEG centers to reframe and reinvent distribution. For example, she pointed out how, in the age of cross-posting files and embedding code across multiple online sites, the idea that viewers go only to TV channels for information is inadequate. PEG centers need to embrace the idea of various sources, offering similar content across many distribution conduits.

Daniell Krawczyk, a longtime community media advocate, brought it back to the basics, talking about how important it is for community media centers to know their particular community's needs in order to be effective in using these new online sharing and collaborating platforms. He underscored how, although these platforms may be new, they should be looked upon as tools to continue the mission of PEG centers. Krawczyk acknowledged the degree to which community media centers vary in terms of financial and personnel

resources and discussed the importance for centers to assess their needs and their resources. Emily Frazier of Vermont State Access ([www.vermontaccess.net](http://www.vermontaccess.net)) talked about the file-sharing project among the twenty-five access centers that make up the Vermont Media Exchange (VME). The VME has developed open source technologies to share content and keep these resources accessible to the small rural access centers in Vermont with limited budgets.

Shireen Mitchell of Digital Sistas closed the panel by. She showed a mainstream media clip she uses in her training program ([www.youtube.com/user/digitalsista](http://www.youtube.com/user/digitalsista)) of a Nintendo commercial depicting women as passive consumers of the game system. Mitchell dissected the clip, asking, "How are women, especially women of color, being framed as users of technology? Are they being stereotypically framed as frivolous users, like in this Nintendo commercial?" She explained how she uses these commercials in Digital Sistas' technology training to incorporate media literacy as part of her organization's approach. The panel wrapped up with a lively discussion about the role of emerging digital forms of content distribution as community media centers evolve beyond being just cable channel operators.

The Media Literacy 101 session presented speakers from three different community media centers who shared tips on how to integrate media literacy into general production curricula. Mary Harmon from Santa Rosa



Community Media deconstructed a news clip from her local news network and demonstrated how even facts, when placed into a distorted context, can be misleading. Mary Pumphrey from St. Paul Neighborhood Network talked about the importance of teaching media literacy with youth-specific programs. Similarly, Vanessa Bateau from MNN's Youth Channel gave an overview of the Youth Channel's "Mind over Media: Who's in Control" curricula, which she uses as a guide for critical thinking discussions with Youth Channel participants.

While all of these participants had different approaches to integrating more media literacy activities into their curricula, they all agreed that it was worthwhile to set aside at least one hour of a training production class to allow community producers to learn about media literacy and develop critical analysis skills. Facilitation of screenings, followed by discussions, was another activity that the presenters agreed was a powerful way to engage students in media literacy. These activities also provide a space for participants to critique their own work and receive feedback on it. ■CMR

### **Resources for Creating Your Own Videoblog**

[www.freevlog.org](http://www.freevlog.org)  
[www.mnn.org/en/videoblogging](http://www.mnn.org/en/videoblogging)

### **Resources for Digital Storytelling**

#### **Berkeley's Center for Digital Storytelling**

[www.storycenter.org](http://www.storycenter.org)  
 (under resources)

#### **Tech-Head—Digital Storytelling Resources**

[www.tech-head.com/dstory.htm](http://www.tech-head.com/dstory.htm)

#### **KQED TV's Digital Storytelling Initiative**

[www.dsi.kqed.org](http://www.dsi.kqed.org)

#### **MediaProf—"What is Digital Storytelling?"**

[www.mediaprof.org/projects\\_class/videoprojects/digital-storytelling.html](http://www.mediaprof.org/projects_class/videoprojects/digital-storytelling.html)

#### **Manhattan Neighborhood Network's Digital Stories**

[www.mnn.org/en/watch-community-media-programs](http://www.mnn.org/en/watch-community-media-programs)




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Longtime community based media maker, educator, and activist Betty Yu is currently the Director of Community Outreach & Media at Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN), Manhattan's community access TV organization in New York City. At MNN, she provides media making tools and resources to organizations through video production training and a community media grants program. She can be contacted at [betty@mnn.org](mailto:betty@mnn.org).

# Alliance Launches National Keep Us Connected Campaign at the July 2008 Washington, D.C., Conference

■ BY MALKIA K. LYDIA

**We envisioned community media delegations visiting their congressional members, positioning us for an ambitious national goal—legislation that would preserve and support PEG and community media.**

**M**ore than 350 people came together in July to explore the status and future of community media at the Alliance for Community Media International Conference & Exhibition. In addition to our traditional conference activities—powerful sessions, trade show, regional gatherings, and the like—conference participants “charged the Hill” to meet with legislators and their staff, under the Keep Us Connected banner.

The Alliance for Community Media launched the Keep Us Connected campaign to elevate the voices of support for community media and to inject the significance of PEG access into the national policy conversation. In this issue of the *Community Media Review*, we make the case that community media—essential to a healthy democracy—faces challenges that we must work together with our elected officials to overcome.

Beginning with those four days in Washington this summer and continuing over three subsequent months back in our legislative home districts, Alliance members have visited 35 senate offices (that’s over a third!) and 49 House offices, for a total of 84. As we turn a corner in this ongoing Keep

Us Connected initiative and enter the thick of the election season, it is useful to take a look at how the campaign came together and what we intend to create next.

## **Organizers began work in 2007**

As an Alliance, we move our annual conference each year. In 2008, we met in Washington, D.C., for the fourth time in three decades. In addition to the usual conference goals, we wanted to ensure that elected representatives understand and continue to support community media as an essential tool in our democracy. Conference Local Planning Committee (LPC) members were eager to include Hill visits as a core activity, and started conference work a year before the conference started.

At DCTV, we were inspired by a campaign created at our access center by a local nonprofit committed to full voting representation in Congress for Washington, D.C., residents. They used our facilities to boldly spur the issue into the public limelight of the presidential primaries. As an Alliance, why not proactively propel the preservation of community media into the national legislative agenda during this election season?

## **Local Planning Committee work expands across Alliance**

A great cooperative effort grew under LPC leadership and included leaders from Arlington and Fairfax, Virginia, and the National Board Chair of Chairs and Chair of the Equal Opportunity Committee. We envisioned community media delegations visiting their congressional members, positioning us for an ambitious national goal—legislation that would preserve and support PEG and community media. From this vision, the national Board, the Public Policy Working Group (PPWG) and the local planning committee created a game plan that encouraged every Alliance member to visit their Senators and Representatives.

The PPWG took the ball and ran. Many Alliance members signed on to build the campaign. Key organizers tapped into threads on the Announce listserv; Rob McCausland sent messages and e-mail blasts out regularly. Carl Kucharski untiringly drove the intensive work of the PPWG, which had the huge task of coordinating and creating messaging, materials and communications with invaluable support from interim Alliance Executive Director Deb Vinsel and

*Matt Schuster, Chair of the Alliance for Community Media, explains the Keep us Connected campaign.*



Jim Horwood of Spiegel & McDiarmid. Rich Desimone of the Jersey Access Group, ACM Chair of Chairs and a member of the local planning committee, engaged the regional chairs. Paul LeValley, of Arlington Independent Media and the local planning committee, led workshops at regional conferences in the spring and prepared a “how-to” packet of information.

### **Keep Us Connected theme established**

The Keep Us Connected slogan, branding, and buttons were contributed by the Chicago Access Network, CAN TV in Chicago, Illinois. The inspiration and principal source of information was the work spearheaded by CAN TV’s Barbara Popovic, who worked closely with Michael Eisenmenger and with Randy VanDalsen of the Buske Group to compile information on and assess the damage to PEG centers from state video franchise laws. The resulting “Assessing the Damage” report confirmed the need for a proactive national stand, and it formed the backbone of the outreach literature and messaging created to support Keep Us Connected.

## **SUMMARY OF ALLIANCE PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM: PUT COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT IN FEDERAL LAW**

In summary, the ACM proposes a national policy of “community reinvestment” through public, educational, and governmental access organizations which includes funds and bandwidth and/or spectrum that will be used for public purposes by:

- Allowing the local community which owns the public right-of-way to franchise and determine the best use of the community’s property. This principle must be protected by Federal law.
- Dedicating ten percent of the public airwaves and capacity on communication facilities that occupy public rights-of-way to PEG.
- Mandating funding of five percent of gross revenues from all infrastructure and service providers and spectrum licensees to support PEG equipment, facilities, training, and services.
- Making PEG access universally available to any consumer of advanced telecommunications services capable of full-motion video.

By April of 2008, work was under way in the Public Policy Working Group to craft a clear message for the campaign and materials to support presentation of the Alliance public policy platform: “In summary, the ACM proposes a national policy of “community reinvestment” through Public, Educational, and Government access organizations which includes funds and bandwidth and/or spectrum that will be used for public purposes...” (See the sidebar, p. 41, for the full ACM National Policy Platform.)

### **Registrants’ visits take off**

By late spring 2008, as conference registrations came in, the regional chairs and the national office followed up to encourage the registrants to schedule Keep Us Connected meetings with their elected officials. Paul LeValley of AIM coordinated visits and provided information to the national office. Rob McCausland kept a detailed list of conference registrations and how they matched up with scheduled meetings on the Hill. The local planning committee received weekly snapshots of planned participation in Keep Us Connected, and worked to schedule registrants not yet signed up for visits.

The PPWG worked hard under tight deadlines to create a packet to leave behind. Centers had the room to customize their packets, adding local information and letters of support from community groups, individual

producers and allies back home. Immediately after the conference, the PPWG and Board used the Announce LISTSERV to encourage Alliance members to continue the Keep Us Connected work via meetings with their in-district Congressional offices.

### **Alliance members visit nearly 100 offices**

So what do the results look like? Alliance members visited 35 Senate offices and 49 House offices, for a total of 84. That includes eleven visits with the offices of Senate Commerce Committee members and eight visits to members of the House Telecom Subcommittee, those who generate policy pertinent to PEG access and community media.

We delivered the message to Senate and House offices representing communities in each of our eight Alliance regions. On average, 16 percent of the Congressional delegations were reached within each region. The Northeast had the highest success rate—these centers met with 40 percent of the Senators and Representatives (or their staff) from that region.

Alliance members visited 100 percent of the Congressional delegations in Wisconsin, New Hampshire, and Hawaii. Senator Inouye spent almost two hours with the delegation of youth from Hawaii, taking a great interest in their concerns. The youth were proud to represent their state and found the meeting very inspiring.

A group representing access issues nationally met with Senator Harry Reid’s (D-NV) staff. The group included Barbara Popovic, Nantz Rickard of DCTV in Washington, D.C., Alan Bushong of CCTV in Salem, Oregon, and Bill Shickler, a longtime D.C. metro area producer. Sen. Reid is the Majority Leader of the Senate and has a primary role in how issues are addressed through the legislative process. Due to his role and his concerns about PEG in his own state, it was important to give Senator Reid a broad overview of the problems facing PEG access around the country, present the harms survey, and give some specific examples of harms, including problems facing PEG in Nevada. The staff spent almost an hour in a meeting scheduled for 20 minutes, carefully exploring all aspects of the issues and the extent of the problem.

The Jersey Access Group (JAG) offers another example of the power of the Keep Us Connected campaign. During the ACM conference, JAG members met with the office of Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ). Sen. Lautenberg’s office asked for a follow-up meeting in-district, so JAG leaders issued a call to the 70 municipal systems that make up their statewide coalition. Nineteen NJ centers responded with interest. The JAG members arrived at the meeting armed with data and detailed examples of the harms experienced by various townships.



Sen. Lautenberg's in-district staff were wowed—they extended the half-hour meeting to a 90-minute session. JAG members educated them on ten critical issues, including “channel slamming” by one of the state’s larger cable operators, and some cable operators’ unwillingness to provide interconnection among local systems. Later that day, one of the major cable operators also met with the Senator’s office, and Sen. Lautenberg’s staff was equipped to evaluate and question each of the operators’ positions from an informed, confident stance. His office then initiated further investigation into the cases of harm presented by the JAG members.

Moving into the fall, Alliance members took the Keep Us Connected message to some of the public forums convened by the Democratic and Republican parties. Members of the ACM leadership initiated conversations within both parties’ platform committees.

### **Visits lead to House Subcommittee Hearing on damage to PEG Access**

On September 17, Representative Serrano, Chair of the Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government of the House Appropriations Committee, convened a hearing on damage to Public, Educational and Governmental Access. Barbara Popovic of CAN TV and Michael Max Knobbe of BronxNet provided



*Keep Us Connected campaign plenary.*

expert testimony for the Alliance and members across the country.

Alliance member work at the convention was just the first step in our work with the Congress to enact the Alliance National Platform Statement into law. We continue that work on behalf of our communities as we build community through media all across America. ■CMR

**Malkia K. Lydia is associate director of member services at DCTV/Public Access Corporation of Washington, D.C.**

*Significant contributions to this article were made by Nantz Rickard, DCTV Executive Director and Chair of the 2008 Conference Local Planning Committee; Rob McCausland, Alliance Director of Information and Organizing Services; and Rich Desimone, Chair of Regional Representatives of the Alliance National Board.*



*Rika Welch speaking at the Keep Us Connected campaign plenary.*

# Keep Us Connected

■ COMPILED BY SEAN MCLAUGHLIN

**Community media activists and policy wonks gathered in Washington, D.C., with a mission: "Keep Us Connected!"**

**F**resh in the face of a stinging setback in Federal Appeals Court, Alliance for Community Media members convened serious policy discussions and enlisted members across the nation to renew advocacy efforts seeking both short-term relief and long-term solutions to preserve and protect community media.

Less than two weeks before the Alliance's conference convened in Washington, D.C., the Sixth Circuit Court released its opinion upholding the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) preemptive ruling on video franchising (*Alliance for Community Media v. FCC*, No. 07-3391). This ruling was a bitter pill for PEG advocates and many deep, sophisticated discussions were held to consider the near- and long-term impacts and to strategize about appropriate responses.

Since we were gathering inside the Beltway, Alliance members were enlisted to participate in the Keep Us Connected campaign. We called on members to immediately engage their elected representatives and appointed officials with two key points:

1. Public, educational, and governmental (PEG) access delivers the media localism that Congress sought in federal law.
2. FCC rules and state changes to the franchising process require updated

language in the federal law in order to continue to carry out Congress' intent.

A report, "Assessing the Damage," included findings of a 2008 survey that showed that states with video franchise laws preempting local governments have experienced no rate relief for consumers, while substantially reducing public benefits. Reduced PEG funding, lost access to PEG facilities, reduction of network and channel access, impaired signal quality and functionality, and significant new fees for previously free services were all documented. Among the report's preliminary conclusions about the findings was: "This outcome directly contradicts the purpose stated in the Cable Act of 1984, that franchises be responsive to the needs and interests of the local community."

With documentation of substantial damage being done across the nation, and renewed focus on harm being done by the FCC, Keep Us Connected organized state delegations for and coordinated meetings with ACM members to educate Congress and the FCC about community media and the Alliance's work.

Keep Us Connected had just one request: Please help to restore Congress' intent to protect local communications that support the kind of free speech in civic engagement and strong communities envisioned by our Founding Fathers. Two specific actions requested were holding Congressional public hearings

## Timeline for FCC Video Franchise Proceeding (Docket 05-311)

### NOVEMBER 2005

FCC Video Franchise Proceeding (Docket 05-311) is opened at request of the telephone industry

### DECEMBER 2006

FCC adopts First Report and Order in Video Franchise Proceeding

### MARCH 2007

FCC Docket 05-311 First Report and Order is released

### APRIL 2007

Local governments and PEG interests file appeals which are consolidated in the Sixth Circuit under the title *Alliance for Community Media v. FCC*, No. 07-3391

and taking legislative action to restore PEG.

Hearings would help to inform Congress of the harm occurring and the damages being done to PEG access across the nation. Alliance members from the four directions need a venue to tell our story to demonstrate that PEG access fulfills the opportunity to provide media localism.

Legislation could help for the short term, by providing a simple amendment to the Communications Act that would remove a potential restriction on how PEG funds may be spent. And for the long term, more substantial legislation is needed to restore Congress' intent for community media to provide robust access for diverse and local voices.

### **ACM 2008 Conference Public Policy Track**

In addition to the Keep Us Connected activities during the conference, pre-conference sessions offered training and support for the Keep Us Connected campaign. While Alliance members fanned out to meet with policy-makers in Congress and at the FCC, others attended workshops covering a range of public policy issues, including:

#### **PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE**

Expert panelists representing the FCC, cable industry, National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) and ACM discussed recent and pending state and federal legislation, FCC proceedings, and court cases that impact PEG access and other community media.

#### **BROADBAND POLICY: LOCAL, STATE & NATIONAL**

Local governments, PEG providers, and

community activists (Free Press, et al.) shared their perspectives on broadband policies to support planning and development of advanced telecommunications infrastructure for community, educational, and economic development.

#### **MEDIA & PUBLIC INTEREST: INFLUENCING FEDERAL POLICY**

Community media advocates from the Media & Democracy Coalition and allied groups shared some deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities for working with allies to create positive leverage and build influence in the national arena.

#### **COPYRIGHT ISSUES IN THE CURRENT ELECTRONIC MEDIA ENVIRONMENT**

Legal experts covered the nuts and bolts of copyright and intellectual property issues that impact PEG access in light of new and additional issues raised by Internet technologies and applications, such as webstreaming.

#### **NEW STATE LAWS AND THEIR IMPACT ON PEG ACCESS**

Recently enacted state laws have had profound, and usually adverse, impacts on PEG access. Leading advocates from across the nation discussed the consequences of such laws and how they have not produced the benefits promised but have adversely affected community media.

#### **ASK THE LAWYERS**

At this perennial favorite, attendees had the chance to raise questions with lawyers who are leading experts in the issues confronting PEG access. ■**CMR**



Sean McLaughlin serves as the first executive director for Access Humboldt ([www.accesshumboldt.net](http://www.accesshumboldt.net)) a community media organization providing local broadband media access, including TV channels, fiber and wireless network connections, production resources, training and support for local governments, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, residents, and visitors of Humboldt County, California.

McLaughlin has been active in the U.S. national policy arena for decades, serving as an elected board member with the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors ([www.natoa.org](http://www.natoa.org)), and more recently on their Broadband policy task force in 2008.

#### **AUGUST 2007**

FCC deadlines (also known as "shot clock") go into effect, following the Office of Management and Budget approval of rules

#### **NOVEMBER 2007**

FCC adopts Second Report and Order in Video Franchise Proceeding

#### **DECEMBER 2007**

Appeals filed regarding Second Report and Order and held in abeyance pending outcome of pending appeal of First Report and Order

#### **FEBRUARY 2008**

Oral arguments in First Appeal

#### **JUNE 2008**

Sixth Circuit upholds FCC rules in First Report and Order

# House Subcommittee Shows Support for PEG

■ BY ALLIANCE STAFF

On September 17, 2008, members of the Alliance for Community Media testified before the House Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Financial Service and General Government about the increasingly hostile corporate actions and legislative environment public, educational, and governmental (PEG) access must try to exist in. Barbara Popovic, Executive Director of Chicago Access Network, represented the Alliance for Community Media and the Alliance for Communications Democracy (ACD). Joining her to testify on behalf of PEG access was Michael Max Knobbe, Executive Director of BronxNet and President of the Alliance New York chapter. Howard Symons appeared representing the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA) and Monica Desai testified on behalf of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). AT&T was invited to participate but did not attend.

The hearing was called by Subcommittee Chairman José Serrano (D-NY) as a direct result of visits by the Alliance's New York members to the Congressman's office as part of our Keep Us Connected campaign that launched during the national conference in July. Several other committee members had also received visits from Alliance Members. In all, ten of the 15 committee members attended the hearing.

In his opening remarks, Representative Serrano chastised AT&T

for not attending the proceedings. "Let the record show that I consider (AT&T's) decision not to send a witness to be indicative of the company's apparent disregard of the importance of PEG to local communities," said Serrano. Representative Mark Kirk (R-IL), acting as the ranking minority member, added "I'm completely with you on nailing AT&T for what they're doing to public access."

FCC Media Bureau Chief Monica Desai testified first, describing the requirements in sections 611 and 621 of the Communications Act that defined franchise fees and placement of PEG on the basic service tier. In her opening comments, she said, "It has come to our attention that some programmers are moving PEG channels to a digital tier, or are treating them as on-demand channels. We are concerned by these practices. We believe that placing PEG channels on any tier other than the basic service tier may be a violation of the statute."

As she described the legislative threats to PEG, Barbara Popovic explained, "PEG Access exists because of regulations that stem from the 1984 Cable Act. But the FCC's Video Franchising Orders green light a major regulatory shift while failing to safeguard PEG, ignoring localism and diversity goals mandated by Congress." When describing AT&T's U-Verse product, Popovic painted a very clear picture of the deficiencies of the company's method for distributing PEG channels as

an on-demand, Web-like service: "AT&T representatives have repeatedly acknowledged these deficiencies but claim the PEG product is a 'work in progress.' But why the wait? My written testimony includes an independent engineering study that shows PEG channels can be treated equally on systems like AT&T's with readily available technology. Where the laws exist to prevent unequal treatment of PEG, the only reason it continues is government's failure to say three simple words—just do it" she told the subcommittee. She closed by asking the subcommittee for three things:

1. Prohibit funds from being used to implement or enforce the FCC's Video Franchising Orders.
2. Compel the FCC to reconsider these Orders in light of the adverse affect on PEG.
3. Ask the GAO to conduct a study to get to the bottom of the harm that has come to PEG from recent regulatory changes.

The cable industry's representative, Howard Symons, from the NCTA, championed cable's "unique commitment to PEG." Symons painted a rosy picture of the industry's transition to all digital distribution, saying, "Most operators plan to group PEG channels together, so they will remain easy for viewers to find. And just as with commercial programming, the shift from analog to digital PEG will mean enhanced picture quality and all the other benefits of digital transmission."



BronxNet Executive Director Michael Max Knobbe offered a local perspective by sharing many success stories from his organization, which is located in Rep. Serrano's legislative district. Knobbe's examples illustrated how effective PEG access can be as a tool for community development, career skills education, and multicultural understanding. He decried the current practice of "channel slamming," in which cable operators move PEG channels to a high number digital channel and charge an extra monthly fee for digital converter boxes. "This practice pushes what is intended to be open, accessible, and inexpensive programming outside the reach of many consumers," he told the committee members. "The PEG channels are required to be on the basic cable tier of service available to the subscribers," he pointed out.

Following the testimonies, several members of the committee asked questions of the panelists. Monica Desai fielded several questions about the FCC's lack of enforcement of the Cable Act and Howard Symons responded to questions about cable operators' practice of side-stepping regulations regarding PEG channel placement.

In an exchange with Rep. Peter Visclosky (D-IN), Symons pointed to changes in Indiana state law as the reason several access centers in Northern Indiana were closed by Comcast just 30 days after the state franchising law was enacted. "You

**Barbara Popovic explained, "PEG Access exists because of regulations that stem from the 1984 Cable Act. But the FCC's Video Franchising Orders green light a major regulatory shift while failing to safeguard PEG, ignoring localism and diversity goals mandated by Congress."**

know, Congressman," Symons said, "the cable industry didn't ask the state legislatures to change the law." Visclosky instantly raised his index finger and admonished Symons, "Oh, don't say that! Don't say that! I would suggest that that is not a correct statement—to be polite."

It was evident from the questions asked that the Representatives participating understood the value of access and, for the most part, supported our position. When asked why the Federal Communications Commission had not enforced provisions of the Cable Act, Ms. Desai indicated that the Commission had never received a complaint. Rep. Kirk asked Ms. Desai if a joint letter from the Committee would help the FCC expedite an inquiry into these matters, saying, "I would be willing to sign a letter, with the Chairman, to you, saying, 'Hey, get on the case here.' Is that enough for you to get rolling?" Ms. Desai answered, "I'm sure a letter from you and Chairman Serrano would be taken... act on it post-haste."

In closing, Chairman Serrano expressed his support for PEG and shared a personal story about his son, a New York State legislator, being a guest on programs seen on BronxNet. He added, "We stay committed to the commitment I made before to Mr. Kirk and the Committee that the issues that have been discussed here will be placed by this Committee officially in a formal fashion before the FCC, to make sure that we begin to look at the whole issue and how best we can stick to the intent of the law, notwithstanding some changes that have taken along the way."

While this was a very successful day, we cannot be complacent. We must continue to visit with our elected officials, in Washington, D.C., or in their district offices at home, to keep our concerns in the forefront so we can Keep Us Connected! ■CMR



# Working Overtime to Save PEG Access in Wisconsin

■ BY MARY CARDONA

**We told our legislators that we want federal law to be strengthened so that states cannot give away the right of local governments to ask for and receive channels and support. We asked to have PEG access treated like broadcast channels and carried on a tier that every cable subscriber can see without special equipment.**

One of the toughest things I've run up against in the last year of fighting to save public, educational, and governmental (PEG) access in Wisconsin is the attitude that it won't do any good to talk to our legislators. I've come to realize that our legislators badly need us to talk to them so that they can care. Legislators also need to know that we are out there, speaking to groups, giving interviews to the press, and drumming up public support for our cause. Then, when they get up and take a stand, they feel us backing them up. It can be a very lonely, thankless job if you are a legislator who wants to do some good but the public doesn't take any notice. Believe me, corporate lobbyists understand that and they are very good at making legislators feel appreciated—and companies make a strong effort to get public opinion to support the position the legislators take on their behalf.

In July, when Alliance for Community Media members walked the halls of the House and Senate office buildings bringing our pressing concerns to telecommunications aides, at least two of us, Vel Wiley of MATA Community Media in Milwaukee and I, were following in the footsteps of Charter Communications. Charter had made its rounds just hours earlier, explaining its "wonderful" plan for digitizing the PEG channels. That was very sobering. It was mere happenstance that we were there to refute them. What if we had never brought the other side of the story to our legislators? They would never have known about the damage to PEG access.

Vel and I visited every office in the Wisconsin delegation. During our 20-minute visits, we were given an opportunity to present our concerns and ask for action. We told our legislative staffs that Wisconsin's Act 42 was written behind closed doors by the cable and telephone industries without input from municipalities and access advocates. We talked about how Wisconsin's bill is riddled with problems as a result. We explained that Charter was interpreting language in the Act to allow them to move PEG to the digital tier unavailable to between 30 percent and 70 percent of cable subscribers, depending on the city. We talked about how the fundamental principles of localism and diversity underpinning federal communications law and regulation are being undermined by the states.

What do we want? We told our legislators that we want federal law to be strengthened so that states cannot give away the right of local governments to ask for and receive channels and support. We asked to have "channel" better defined, so that we are not turned into webcasts. We asked to have PEG access treated like broadcast channels and carried on a tier that every cable subscriber can see without special equipment. We asked that local channels be allocated to communities based on community need, not the technical convenience of video providers.

We gave each aide a packet of information that included the "Assessing the Damage" piece and folder generated by the Alliance, and four sheets specifically about Wisconsin. One sheet described the harm Wisconsin's



Act 42 has had on Wisconsin PEG and one piece listed Wisconsin stations and noted the ones in the legislator's district. Another table showed the stations receiving PEG fees and how much funding they will lose when PEG fees sunset in 2011, and a final sheet listed the full membership of the Wisconsin Association of PEG Channels.

Everyone listened closely and asked questions. It was good to meet the aides responsible for communicating our message to our representatives in the Senate and House and it brought home to us once again that in order for our legislators to do their job, we need to do ours.

As she has for years, Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-Madison) took a special interest in our situation. Her office wrote a letter to Charter Communications and circulated it in September to the rest of our delegation. WAPC members called our delegation, urging them to sign it. This week, the letter to Charter was mailed. Representative Baldwin, joined by Senators Feingold (D-WI) and Kohl (D-WI) and Representatives Kagen (D-WI) and Moore (D-WI), expressed their dismay that Charter planned to digitize the PEG channels, making PEG unviewable to a large portion of the company's subscribers. The letter stated, "Charter's interest to provide additional services to customers should not come at the expense of local programming."

**Representative  
Baldwin's letter  
stated, "Charter's  
interest to provide  
additional services  
to customers should  
not come at the  
expense of local  
programming."**

The letter expressed relief that Charter has delayed removing PEG from the basic analog tier, but also noted that the relocation of PEG channels to the 90's "still jeopardizes viewership and consumer awareness of this programming."

A copy of the letter also was sent to FCC Commissioners. Yet Charter found out about the letter and tried to stop it.

Our next move is to call and thank our legislators for signing this letter, and express our dismay to those who didn't.

If we had not walked the halls that day in July, we might not have this letter dated September 23, 2008, in our hands today. But whether you walk the halls in Washington or walk across a street to a local office or simply pick up the phone, in the end this is what matters: building that ongoing, mutually supportive relationship with your legislator and doing the community organizing that will provide support for our legislators when they stand up to defend PEG. ■CMR

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**Mary Cardona is the executive director of the Wisconsin Association of PEG Channels. Fifty-five members strong, the association has been serving access stations in Wisconsin since 1998.**

# New York Alliance Members Shine Light on Damage to PEG

## Representative Serrano Calls for House Subcommittee Hearing

■ BY DAN COUGHLIN

**The new Verizon franchise agreement included important increases in financial support as well as an expansion of public access channels from four to nine. The deal showed the success of local franchising in strengthening localism and diversity in the cable industry.**

Summer in the nation's capital can be hot, but nowhere more so this past July than on Capitol Hill during the Alliance for Community Media's national Keep Us Connected Day. More than 200 public, educational, and governmental (PEG) access advocates from some 30 states burned up the hallways and offices of the House and Senate office buildings, arguing passionately for PEG access. Attendees came from as far as Hawaii to as close as Washington, D.C., itself. Adults and youth united for freedom of speech and diverse voices in the media.

The New York State contingent was strong and powerful. More than 20 PEG representatives came from New York City alone, representing access centers BronxNet, Brooklyn Community Access Television (BCAT), Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) and Queens Public Television (QPTV).

The NYC contingent was buoyed by a recently struck deal with a new entrant into the New York video market—phone and fiber-optic giant Verizon. The new Verizon franchise agreement included important increases in financial support as well as an expansion of public access channels from four to nine. The deal showed the success of local franchis-

ing in strengthening localism and diversity in the cable industry.

"We came to Congress with the message that local franchising can work both in allowing competition and in ensuring that PEG access remains strong," said Zenaida Mendez, the External Affairs Director at MNN. "You do not have to sacrifice PEG and local franchising to have competition."

New York City PEG members met with more than eight Congressional members and Federal Communications Commission staff members. They included Representative Carolyn Maloney, representing Manhattan's Upper East Side, the old "silk stocking" district; House Ways and Means Committee Chair Charlie Rangel (D-NY); Representative José E. Serrano of the Bronx; Representative Jerold Nadler of Manhattan; Representative Ed Towns of Brooklyn; House Commerce Committee member Eliot Engel of the Bronx; and Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY). New York PEG members also met with Senate Commerce Committee and FCC staffers.

On the whole, attendees found the members and staffers to be interested in and responsive to PEG issues, and they made many new connections. The message was this: PEG access

nationwide is under threat and New Yorkers need to stand up for diversity and localism in the media.

The Keep Us Connected Day was such a success that shortly after the visits, Rep. Serrano, who represents the Sixteenth Congressional District of New York in the Bronx, a member of the exclusive House Appropriations Committee and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, called for a hearing on PEG for September 17, 2008. ■CMR

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**Dan Coughlin is the executive director of the Manhattan Neighborhood Network.**





# Alternatives in Training Strategies

■ BY DEVORAH HILL

Admittedly, the title “Alternatives in Training Strategies: The Pedagogy of Project-Based Learning” doesn’t make you want to run out and tell everyone about this hot workshop. Though the title made us sound kind of intellectual and abstract, the workshop was anything but that. The workshop intended to expose community media centers to different approaches to training our broad and diverse base of constituents. The project-based learning model shifts away from the traditional practices, such as a teacher-led format, and instead emphasizes a learning methodology that is long-term, interdisciplinary, student-led, and draws from their experiences. The workshop provided participants with tips and strategies on how to incorporate this pedagogy of teaching into their centers.

Greg Hiltz, training coordinator for Capital Community Television, Salem, Oregon, was the moderator. He discussed the “process verses product” challenge we all face when training the public. As community media educators we want producers to be concerned with the community and less concerned with creating the “Me, Mine, and I” show. How do you do that? How do you engage people while teaching them both the technical and the aesthetic aspects of television production? You get them invested in the project, and this workshop offered some practical ways to go about doing just that.

Rosten Woo, executive director of the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), Brooklyn, New York, shared strategies used at CUP. The center works with youth to create collaborative projects that explore the urban environment. CUP creates project-based learning experiences that bring youth face-to-face with the people who make decisions that affect their lives: community advocates, government

officials, and businesspeople. Students then work with CUP staff to create educational projects to solidify and spread their knowledge and understanding to the general public. These students are answering questions they have regarding their subject. Their personal inquiry provides the investment that assists the collective learning process.

The next presenter, Peter Poiré-Odegard, community media facilitator for Portland Community Media (PCM) in Oregon, shared how the *Portland People and Places* series gathers new producers together. During an eight-session program, Portland’s community producers work as a team to develop a profile that airs as part of the *Portland People and Places* series. Producers collectively determine their topic, plan, shoot, and edit a complete field segment. Working as a team, they learn community storytelling using the medium of television; basic storyboarding and scripting; conducting field interviews; understanding the fundamentals of field lighting, audio, and camcorder operation; and editing in Final Cut Express. Members of the class develop a productive interdependency, sharing their knowledge and ideas.

The floor was finally given to Deborah Hill of Manhattan Neighborhood Network, who explained how to utilize digital storytelling as an outreach strategy. These short-term narratives center on the personal. They are the stories we all carry with us about the people, places, and events we have lived through. This process involves collaborating with local nonprofits. Community members write a short narrative (no more than 250 words) about a person, place, or event. They select music and images (photographs, drawings, and video footage) that will accompany the narrative they have developed. Then, using any

**As community media educators we want producers to be concerned with the community and less concerned with creating the “Me, Mine, and I” show.**

**The project-based learning model shifts away from the traditional practices, such as a teacher-led format, and instead emphasizes a learning methodology that is long-term, interdisciplinary, student-led, and draws from their experiences.**

editing software, each participant assembles all of the elements to tell a short story—no more than three minutes long. These theme-related stories become the fabric of a community oral history as seen through the eyes of those who live there. You can see some of these stories at [www.mnn.org/en/watch-community-media-programs](http://www.mnn.org/en/watch-community-media-programs).

To give the workshop participants a little taste of the process, each person wrote a short story. At the end of the workshop, people shared their stories. We finished the session by giving attendees the chance to be the panelist. Several people stood to share what they are doing to use real projects as a way to train producers. We barely scratched the surface of discussion on this topic! I hope we see it again in Portland in 2009. ■CMR



**Devorah Hill heads the Non-linear Editing Laboratory at Manhattan Neighborhood Network. She is a media educator with several decades of experience developing curricula and instructing the public in the effective use of electronic and visual media as a tool for advocacy and community development.**

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